



NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

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THESIS

**AFFECTING REFORM:
EXPLAINING THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA'S
CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNITED NATIONS
PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN COMPARATIVE
CONTEXT**

by

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September 2011

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**AFFECTING REFORM:
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UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN COMPARATIVE
CONTEXT**

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**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT

The Kingdom of Cambodia has recently begun to provide Royal Cambodian Armed Forces personnel to United Nations-led peacekeeping operations in Africa, and the Middle East. This thesis draws on systemic, regional, and domestic level theories for why states contribute to international organizations in an attempt to explain participation in peacekeeping abroad. It argues that Cambodia's political and military elite promote peacekeeping as a means of inexpensively affecting military reform. This thesis will also provide a comparative case study of the Republic of Indonesia. The Southeast Asian nation has significantly increased the number of personnel it provides to United Nations peacekeeping missions, from a few hundred in early 2001 to nearly eighteen hundred personnel in mid-2011.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANS	Armée Nationale Sihanoukiste
AP	Anti- Personnel
AT	Anti-Tank
ADMM+	ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting-Plus
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
BdCC	Bataillon de Chasseurs Cambodgiens
CCMR	Center for Civil–Military Relations
CGDK	Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea
CPX	Command Post Exercise
CPAF	Cambodian People's Armed Forces
CPNLAF	Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces
CUNPK	Center for United Nations Peacekeeping
CGDK	Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea
FANK	Forces Armées Nationales Khmères
FARK	Forces Armées Royales Khmères
FTX	Field Training Exercise
GN	Garde Nationale
GPOI	Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative
GRUNK	Gouvernement Royal d'Union Nationale du Kampuchéa
HADR	Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IAPTC	International Association of Peace Training Centers

ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KPNLF	Khmer People's National Liberation Front
KPRA	Kampuchean Peoples' Revolutionary Army
LPA	Lao People's Army
MINURCAT	United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad
MPTC	Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Center
MoD	Ministry of Defense
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MOVECON	Movement Control
MTF	Maritime Task Force
NADK	National Army of Democratic Kampuchea
NPMEC	National Center for Peacekeeping Force, Mine and Explosive Remnants of War Clearance
NVA	North Vietnamese Army
PAVN	People's Army of Vietnam
PRK	People's Republic of Kampuchea
RAK	Revolutionary Army of Kampuchea
RCAF	Royal Cambodian Armed Forces
RCG	Royal Government of Cambodia
RTARF	Royal Thai Armed Forces
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia

TNI–AL	Tentara Nasional Indonesia–Angkatan Laut
UN	United Nations
UNAMID	African Union / United Nations Hybrid Mission in Darfur
UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNEF	United Nations Emergency Force
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNMAO	United Nations Mine Action Office
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMIS	United Nations Mission in Sudan
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNMO	United Nations Military Observer
UN-PKO	United Nations Peacekeeping Operations
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UXO	Unexploded Ordinance

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW

“With over 116,000 deployed personnel across 15 missions, the scale of peacekeeping today is unprecedented,” states the United Nations report “A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping.”¹ The report continues, “UN peacekeeping cannot rely heavily on a small number of significant contributors. An expanded base of troop- and police-contributing countries is required to enhance collective burden-sharing and to meet future requirements.”² Nations such as India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh can no longer bear the bulk of the peacekeeping burden.

Increasingly, Southeast Asian nations are provided a greater number of troops to United Nations-led peacekeeping operations. In October 2004, less than 800 personnel from three Southeast Asian nations (i.e., The Republic of the Philippines, The Republic of Indonesia, and Malaysia) were deployed as United Nations peacekeepers. By July 2011, over 4,700 personnel from seven Southeast Asian nations were actively participating in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Some nations, such as the Republic of Thailand, resumed their participation after a lengthy hiatus; some nations, such as the Kingdom of Cambodia, deployed peacekeepers for the first time.

Since 2005, the Kingdom of Cambodia has provided on average over 145 peacekeepers each year to a multitude of UN missions, including the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) / United Nations Mission in Southern Sudan (UNMISS), and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT).³ Additional engineers were deployed in late 2010 in support of the United Nations Interim

¹“A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for UN Peacekeeping,” last modified July 2009. Available online at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/newhorizon.pdf>, accessed November 1, 2010.

² Ibid.

³ “Monthly Summary of Contributors of Military and Police Personnel,” last modified August 31, 2010. Available online at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors>, accessed September 16, 2010.

Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).⁴ The majority of these peacekeepers have been field engineers, responsible for demining and unexploded ordinance disposal.

This thesis will address the following question: What are the Kingdom of Cambodia's motives for contributing an increasing number of troops to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UN-PKO)? This thesis will attempt to answer the question by conducting a brief historical analysis of the employment of the Cambodian armed forces from independence till the modern era. Additionally, this thesis will briefly examine the employment of another military force in the region, one which is steadily increasing its participation in UN-PKO—the Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI) of the Republic of Indonesia. By determining potential motives for the Republic of Indonesia's participation in UN-PKO it may be possible to establish a more general trend present across a larger number of Southeast Asian nation-states.

B. IMPORTANCE

Modern peacekeeping operations bear little resemblance to the peacekeeping operations of the past. Regarding the immediate post-Cold War era, Michael Lipson writes, “[United Nations] Missions were deployed to settings that were considered unsuitable for peacekeeping under the traditional principles of peacekeeping formulated during the Cold War.”⁵ Lipson refers to the early 1990s, when relative gains in the peace dividend were made in Cambodia, but were then almost immediately off-set by setbacks in Bosnia and Somalia. Lipson continues, “Peacekeepers were sent to intrastate conflicts and the traditional peacekeeping principles of consent, neutrality, and the limited use of force were stretched.”⁶ As Marrack Goulding writes, “In political, legal and military terms, and in terms of the survival of one's own troops, there is, on the one hand, all the difference in the world between being deployed with the consent and cooperation of the

4 “Cambodia to Dispatch Peacekeepers to Lebanon Next Week,” last modified June 23, 2010. Available online at: [http://www.un.int/cambodia/Bulletin_Files/June10/Cambodia_to_\[-\]dispatch.pdf](http://www.un.int/cambodia/Bulletin_Files/June10/Cambodia_to_[-]dispatch.pdf), accessed September 15, 2010.

5 Michael Lipson, “A ‘Garbage Can’ Model of UN Peacekeeping,” *Global Governance* 13 (Jan–Mar 2007), 79.

6 Lipson, “A ‘Garbage Can’ Model of UN Peacekeeping,” 79.

parties...and, on the other hand, being deployed without their consent and with powers to use force to compel them to accept the decisions of the security council.”⁷

The mounting need for peace enforcement operations, authorized by the United Nations Security Council primarily in order to bring resolution to intrastate conflict, has caused United Nations member-states to reevaluate their motives for sending peacekeepers in harm’s way. An analysis of way some member-states are not only actively participating in multiple peace enforcement operations, but also increasing the number of peacekeepers they send abroad, may aid in overcoming participation shortfalls.

C. HYPOTHESES

What motives might the Royal Government of Cambodia (RCG) have for authorizing troops to participate in a United Nations-led peacekeeping operation?

Hypothesis 1: The RCG authorizes peacekeeping in order to conform to expectations of nation-state behavior.

The first hypothesis argues that the existing international system significantly influences, but not necessarily dictates, nation-state behavior. In essence, peacekeeping is simply the right the thing to do because the international system says it is so.

Hypothesis 2: The RCG promotes peacekeeping as a means of improving their position in regional and international organizations.

The second hypothesis posits that the RCG uses peacekeeping as a means demonstrating its commitment to the international system, thereby improving its image and / or position.

Hypothesis 3: The RCG looks to peacekeeping as a means of affecting military reform.

⁷ Marrack Goulding, “The Evolution of International Peacekeeping,” *International Affairs* 69 (Jul. 1993): 461.

Regarding the final hypothesis, the international system is still important; however, domestic incentives for military reform outweigh the RCG's need to either conform to, or transform, regional and international organizations.

D. LITERATURE REVIEW

Michael Brown writes, "In the complex, increasingly interconnected world of the twenty-first century, multilateralism will not only be an option—it will be a necessity."⁸ Traditional explanations of nation-state behavior no longer apply in the modern world. State motives increasingly go beyond fundamentally realist balance-of-power, neorealist security, or liberal interdependence explanations. Increasingly, states are required to act in ways that allow them to either mitigate or negate previously undefined threats to national interests; these threats include, but are not limited to, transnational terrorism, pandemic and endemic diseases, and even global climate change.

Over the last decade, scholars have begun to craft new explanations for nation-state behavior, which often borrow concepts from one or more international relations theories. Furthermore, thanks to the growing transparency of the modern world, scholars are able to examine state motives at the systemic, regional, and domestic level. The following review of current literature regarding state motives for participation in multilateral, international operations will help to identify salient theoretical features.

1. Systemic Explanations

The complexity of modern international politics has mandated the creation of mechanisms which facilitate state cooperation and coordination. Robert Jervis maintains that states are increasingly becoming more transparent in their behavior in order to accommodate mutually supporting interests.⁹ The behavior of one state must be examined in the light of other states' behaviors. Seth Weinberger goes on to explain the concept of "Institutional Signaling":

⁸ Michael E. Brown, "New Global Dangers," in *Leashing the Dogs of War*, ed. Chester A. Crocker et al. (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 40.

⁹ Robert Jervis, "Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate," *International Security* 24 (Summer, 1999): 51.

Institutions, by virtue of their ability to impose costs on states as a result of compliance with the rules and obligations, provide a means of generating signals that will be accepted as credible by the policymakers of a given state. Those signals will be interpreted as revealing vital information about the true nature and interests of other states. Only if they have ways of sending and reading such signals can two states escape the pressures of the security dilemma and begin moving toward a cooperative relationship.¹⁰

Weinberger explains that states are compelled to indicate the true intent of their behavior due to the various constraints imposed on them by the international political system. However, some scholars maintain that states are simultaneously restricted and emboldened by the existing structure of international politics.

Scholars, such as Martha Finnemore, write that the structure of international politics is defined by internationally recognized norms and values.¹¹ Finnemore writes, “The social nature of international politics creates normative understandings among actors that, in turn, coordinate values, expectations, and behavior.”¹² Finnemore goes on to explain that the increasing likelihood of states to participate in multilateral humanitarian interventions is a direct reflection of the salience of internationally accepted norms in the political decision making process. Finnemore continues, “Multilateral norms create political benefits for conformance and costs for nonconforming action. They create, in part, the structure of incentives facing states.”¹³ States are likely to define themselves, and be defined by others, in terms of either how much, or how little, they adhere to the published norms of the international community.

Today, states are defined in terms of their acceptance of predominately-Western democratic ideals. Marina Ottaway writes, “It has become axiomatic that democracy is

10 Seth Weinberger, “Institutional Signaling and the Origins of the Cold War,” *Security Studies* 12 (2003): 81.

11 Internationally accepted norms are best delineated by former-United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan’s “In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All,” available online at: <http://www.un.org/largerfreedom/contents.htm>, accessed January 14, 2011.

12 Martha Finnemore, “Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention,” in *The Culture of National Security*, ed. John G. Ruggie (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 157.

13 Ibid., 183.

the only acceptable political system, good for all countries under all circumstances. As a result, democracy promotion has become an important component of the relationship between the so-called international community—in practice the rich industrial democracies and the multilateral institutions they dominate—and the rest of the world.”¹⁴ This sentiment is echoed by Oliver Ramsbotham, who writes, “The harsh actuality of international politics [is] that, when it comes to full-scale international interventions, it is only the powerful who intervene in the affairs of the weak, not the other way round.”¹⁵ However, Ramsbotham fails to recognize the contribution of developing nations to both peacekeeping and Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief (HADR) operations.

Ideally, democratic states “share norms, enjoy a particular standing within the international community, and converge in terms of policies and strategies to solve world problems.”¹⁶ Inherently cooperative, democratic nations gain relative security through the active promotion of accepted norms in the international community.¹⁷ A study conducted by D.C.F. Daniel and Leigh C. Caraher in 2006 found that the majority of nations contributing troops to UN-PKO were “democratic, middle income or rich, stable, and lesser or highly developed.”¹⁸ However, relatively non-democratic nations are beginning to contribute significant numbers of troops to United Nations peacekeeping missions abroad. Arturo Sotomayor writes,

Numerous democratizing regimes, some of which are still facing authoritarian legacies, are going beyond the call of duty in supplying troops. Moreover, some [troop lending countries] have authoritarian

¹⁴ Marina Ottaway, “Is Democracy the Answer,” in *Leashing the Dogs of War*, ed. Chester A. Crocker et. al. (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 603.

¹⁵ Oliver Ramsbotham, “The Ethics of Intervention,” in *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*, ed. Oliver Ramsbotham et. al. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 286.

¹⁶ Arturo C. Sotomayor Velazquez, “Why Some States Participate in UN Peace Missions While Others Do Not: An Analysis of Civil-Military Relations and Its Effects on Latin America’s Contributions to Peacekeeping Operations,” *Security Studies* 19 (February 2010): 170. Andreas Andersson, “United Nations Intervention by United Democracies? State Commitment to UN Interventions,” *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association* 37 (December 2002): 363–386.

¹⁷ Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, “What Democracy Is...And Is Not,” in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, eds. Patrick H. O’Neil and Ronald Rogowski (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2010), 153.

¹⁸ D.C.F. Daniel and Leigh C. Caraher, “Characteristics of Troop Contributors to Peace Operations and Implications for Global Capacity,” *International Politics* 13 (September 2006): 308.

regimes, and while the peace explanation claims to be probabilistic and not deterministic, the fact that major troop suppliers remain nondemocratic needs to be explained rather than assumed or simply treated as outliers.¹⁹

If decidedly non-democratic states nonetheless contribute to multilateral operations, what other possible explanations exist for their behavior?

2. Regional Explanations

Kai He writes:

Built on neorealism's balance of power theory in conjunction with insights from neoliberalism's interdependence theory and integrated via Joseph Grieco's 'voice opportunity' hypothesis, the institutional balancing model identifies the mechanism of 'institutional balancing,' i.e., to counter pressures or threats through initiating, utilizing, and dominating multilateral institutions, as an overlooked realist strategy for states to pursue security under anarchy.²⁰

Regarding Grieco's "voice opportunity" hypothesis, Kai He provides the following summary and subsequent modification:

Weak but influential states treat institutions as a means to constrain strong states and to increase their weight in regional decision-making. The institutional realist model modifies the key assumption of the 'voice opportunity' hypothesis by introducing another systemic variable—interdependence—to specify when and why weak states can successfully use institutions as a means of pursuing their security. In addition, the institutional balancing model expands the application of the 'voice opportunity' hypothesis from economic cooperation to security issues.²¹

Similar to Weinberger's "Institutional Signaling," Kai He's "Institutional Balancing" is a mechanism for states in general, and developing states in particular, to assure security through multilateral cooperation in the broader context of international politics. Nations are more likely to cooperate with other nations of similar economic conditions, cultural background, or shared borders, rather than like democratic ideals.

19 Sotomayor, "Why Some States Participate in UN Peace Missions While Others Do Not," 171.

20 Kai He, "Institutional Balancing and International Relations Theory," 492.

21 Ibid., 512–513.

Identified shortly after the inception of the United Nations, those states not belonging to the “Big Five” (i.e., The United States, The United Kingdom, China, Russia, and France) but, when considered in aggregate, may possess enough political power to influence the decision making process of the United Nations Security Council, are deemed to be “middle powers.”²² “Middle powers” are able to collectively maintain the status quo, and therefore able to “protect and preserve” their national interests through a unity-of-effort. Furthermore, “middle powers” are assumed to value socio-political discourse above brutish military intervention. Arturo Sotomayor writes, “Middle powers are said to pursue multilateral solutions, [be] facilitators in building coalitions, managers in their own regions, and promoters/enforcers of international norms.”²³ “Middle power” theorists purport that their unique collective identity makes them exceptionally adept at peacekeeping, and qualifies them for recognition in the UN decision making process.²⁴ However, Sotomayor points out that not all “middle power” states behave the same way.²⁵ Furthermore, “middle power” practice is not congruent with respective rhetoric. Sotomayor writes, “Since 2000, a large number of small and weak states, not identified or classified as middle powers, are bearing the heaviest burdens.”²⁶ If non-democratic nations are unexpectedly increasing the number of troops they provide to United Nations Peacekeeping operations, while at the same time “Middle Power” nations are taking a noted step back, what other factors seem to influence state behavior?

3. Domestic Explanations

Laura Neack states, “In terms of who participates and how they participate, in terms of where peace-keeping operations get launched, in terms of the impressions of

22 Sotomayor, “Why Some States Participate in UN Peace Missions While Others Do Not,” 169.

23 Sotomayor, “Why Some States Participate in UN Peace Missions While Others Do Not,” 169.

24 This argument is eerily similar to that made by “Democratic Peace Theory” proponents.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., 170.

peace-keepers and observers, states participate in peace-keeping to serve their own interests.”²⁷

Neack concludes:

The realist explanation of state participation in UN peace-keeping is that states do whatever they can, given their power resources, to protect and preserve their national interests. If national leaders see their states’ interests inexorably linked to the continuation of the international status quo, they will support and defend the status quo.²⁸

Neack argues that states behave according to their own self-interests. Therefore, domestic concerns take precedence over international challenges to accepted norms of behavior. States are unlikely to participate in multilateral peacekeeping operations unless certain conditions are met at home.

State interests are shaped by civil-military and bureaucratic considerations.²⁹

Furthermore, according to Sotomayor,

Variations in terms of commitments can be explained in terms of security doctrines and integration of military and foreign policy roles. Countries with externally oriented doctrines and integrated foreign and defense policies are more likely to commit troops to the UN than countries with national security doctrines and segregated military and foreign policy roles.³⁰

Sotomayor goes on to show that participation is not strictly limited countries with externally oriented doctrines; countries with either mixed military doctrine, or countries transitioning from any another orientation towards an externally oriented military doctrine, may choose to participate in UNPKO, albeit in a limited capacity. Sotomayor writes, “[Peacekeeping] can provide a means to transit from one doctrine to another

²⁷ Laura Neack, “UN Peace-Keeping: In the Interests of Community or Self,” *Journal of Peace Research* 32 (May 1995): 194.

²⁸ Neack, “UN Peace-Keeping: In the Interests of Community or Self,” 184.

²⁹ Sotomayor, “Why Some States Participate in UN Peace Missions While Others Do Not,” 162.

³⁰ Ibid.

without provoking large budgetary and operational cuts—justifying some levels of expenditure at a time when immanent internal security threats are eroding.”³¹

4. In Summary

Doug Lieb writes:

On balance, the truth lies between the extremes [realism and liberalism]. Supposing that leaders who author foreign policy have absolutely no stake in the politics of their nations is as impractical as supposing that they are so preoccupied with those politics as to develop strategy without giving any thought to external conditions. It is similarly difficult to conceive of major global institution as having either no effect at all upon leaders’ thought processes or as compelling leaders to take action that runs counter to their national interests.³²

Increasingly, states are compelled to interact in the global commons. Therefore, decisions are tempered by universally accepted norms of state behavior. Furthermore, as rapid advances in technology facilitate cultural exchange and economic interdependence, as well as the salience of transnational actors, developing nation-states will continue to cement regional and international partnerships in order to mitigate external security threats and internal instability. Additionally, the growing role of transnational actors will require refined civil-military relations in order to inscribe foreign and domestic policies which concurrently stem transnational threats and maintain state sovereignty.

E. METHODOLOGY

This thesis will primarily be a comparative, historical analysis of the employment primarily of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), but also the Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI). Secondary sources will provide the lion’s share of historical background, while primary sources will allow for more in-depth analysis of current RCAF and TNI activities, to include peacekeeping.

³¹ Sotomayor, “Why Some States Participate in UN Peace Missions While Others Do Not,” 177.

³² Lieb is referring to military leaders, and not politicians. Doug Lieb, “The Limits of Neorealism,” *Harvard International Review* 26 (2004): 27.

1. Primary Sources

Primary sources generally include official documents from applicable international organizations (i.e., United Nations and ASEAN), discussed nation-states (i.e., Cambodia and Indonesia), and sundry non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations. Additional primary sources may include the media, and to a very limited extent social networking Internet sites (i.e., public blogs); social networking sites have provided valuable insight into the both international and national criticism of the Kingdom of Cambodia's participation in UN-PKO. Finally, the author's personal observations, gathered over the course of several deployments to both Cambodia and Indonesia in support of the United States Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative (GPOI), will be provided when appropriated.

2. Secondary Sources

Many of the secondary sources used in writing this thesis deal with Cambodia either during or after the reign of Pol Pot. In this area, Ben Kiernan's *The Pol Pot Regime*, Elizabeth Becker's *When the War Was Over*, and Evan Gottesman's *Cambodia After the Khmer Rouge* proved extremely valuable. Additionally, the United States Government's 1990 study of Cambodia, edited by Russell R. Ross, also proved highly beneficial.

In dealing with the comparative chapter on Indonesia, Adrian Vickers *A History of Modern Indonesia*, and Jacques Bertrand's *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia*, were indispensable. Additionally, *Indonesia-Cambodia: Forging Ties Through Thick and Thin*, edited by Nazaruiddin Nasution, provided some intriguing insight on the bonds shared by formerly "non-aligned" nations.

3. In-Case and Comparative Case Studies

This thesis will examine Cambodia's participation in UN-PKO using both in-case and comparative case studies. The dynamics of Cambodia's participation in UN-PKO allow for an in-case comparison to be conducted across a broad spectrum of time. Specifically, this thesis will examine the role of the armed forces during the immediate

post-colonial Sihanouk era, as well as under the political stewardship of heads-of-state Lon Nol, Pol Pot, Hun Sen.

Additionally, Cambodia's participation in UN-PKO will be examined in a comparative context with the participation of other Southeast Asian nations; specifically, this thesis will examine the Kingdom of Cambodia's current level of participation in UN-PKO with that of the Republic of Indonesia.

F. THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis will consist of five chapters. This chapter provides a very brief introduction to the topic, as well as a short literature review regarding potential nation-state motivations for participation in United Nations led peacekeeping operations.

Chapter II deals with the evolution of Cambodian politics from independence to the modern era. Each of the key personalities in Cambodia's political past will be examined, beginning with Norodom Sihanouk and concluding with Hun Sen. Furthermore, this chapter will briefly examine how growing regional interdependence in an unsteady security environment have influenced Cambodian decision makers.

Chapter III traces the evolution and employment of Cambodia's armed forces. The most conspicuous arm of the political regime, Cambodia's military has been utilized by the previous regimes to consolidate domestic political power, and prop-up a burdensome patronage system. However, the contemporary Royal Cambodian Armed Forces is in the process of transformation, gradually embarking on nobler efforts.

Chapter IV provides a comparative case study on Indonesia's participation in United Nations-led peacekeeping operations. Once used for the suppression of internal unrest, the TNI now plays a significant role in peacekeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa and in the Middle East.

Chapter V briefly offers a prognosis for Cambodia and its role in peacekeeping, as well as presents some personal observations from the author.

II. THE POLITICS OF CAMBODIA

A. INTRODUCTION

Donald E. Weatherbee writes:

From independence, the states of Southeast Asia, individually and collectively, have struggled in their international environments for policy autonomy. By autonomy is meant the ability to pursue self-defined national interests with-in the limits of national capabilities, free from externally imposed political, economic, or military constraints.³³

Since independence, Cambodian elites have persistently espoused the principles of non-intervention and neutrality; however, a combination of internal and external security threats has prohibited successive regimes from pursuing unilateral approaches to political stability, economic development, or security.

For a nation largely dependent on financial aid, the principles of neutrality and non-intervention are, essentially, no longer pertinent. Weatherbee continues, “The irony in the struggle for autonomy is that while Southeast Asian states enhance their capabilities through globalization, they meet new categories of nontraditional policy-limiting demands aggressively promoted not only by states, but by international nongovernmental organizations that, unlike states, can penetrate sovereignty with direct links to domestic NGO counterparts.”³⁴ Since independence, Cambodian heads-of-state have been required to balance national interests with international expectations.

Increasingly, Cambodia has had to turn to regional and international organizations for support. Cambodia’s admittance into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in early 1999 allowed the nation to pursue regional economic integration

³³ Donald E. Weatherbee, *International Relations in Southeast Asia*, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield (2009), 22–23.

³⁴ Ibid.

initiatives, and re-evaluate existing security concerns, all while continuing to promote non-intervention. Kai He writes,

The increasing economic interdependence in the region along with international trade and foreign investment rendered traditional military balancing inadequate in dealing with ASEAN's security concerns. ASEAN states [such as Cambodia], therefore, chose institutional balancing to pursue security, i.e. relying on multilateral institutions to bind and constrain targeted challengers or using institutions to countervail the pressures from potential threats.³⁵

Unlike previous regimes, the current government under Prime Minister Hun Sen actively pursues an “institutional balancing” approach to mitigating regional security concerns and international criticism of domestic socio-political conditions.

B. “THE WEATHERVANE PRINCE”: HEAD-OF-STATE NORODOM SIHANOUK³⁶

Cambodia achieved independence from France on November 9, 1953.³⁷ Almost immediately, the nation's elites were faced with a conundrum: retain the monarchy, which maintained popular support in the rural areas but was viewed by some urbanites as tainted by French influence, or make a bold move towards a more western form of democracy.³⁸ Ultimately, the decision would rest with King Norodom Sihanouk.

Sihanouk chose to cobble together various aspects of western democracy and predominately-eastern authoritarian politics. Serge Thion writes, “Although formally relinquishing the regalia to his father Suramarit, [Sihanouk] nevertheless retained as many royal trappings as possible, and there was no question for the population as to who the real king was.”³⁹ Sihanouk made certain political concessions in order to hide the

³⁵ He, “Institutional Balancing,” 511.

³⁶ Norodom Sihanouk, *War and Hope: The Case for Cambodia* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), xxxi.

³⁷ Marie Alexandrine Martin, *Cambodia: A Shattered Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 62

³⁸ Serge Thion, “The Pattern of Cambodian Politics,” in *The Cambodian Agony*, eds. David A Abling and Marlowe Hood (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1987), 153.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 154.

reality of life in post-colonial Cambodia from the international community. Thion continues, “[Sihanouk] was the perfect ‘Oriental’ ruler, with harem politics, secret police, widespread corruption, costly festivals, and even a touch of buffoonery in the shape of his absurd dabbling in singing and movie making.”⁴⁰ Film-making aside, Sihanouk’s efforts to shield the regime from the scrutiny of an international community increasingly growing concerned with domestic strife would ultimately shape Cambodia’s contemporary foreign policy.

Regarding Sihanouk’s foreign policy, Russell H. Fifield writes, “Sovereignty, independence, and neutrality are closely linked in the Cambodian outlook.”⁴¹ Faced with a growing insurgency, Sihanouk promoted a foreign policy of neutrality in order to stay out of the growing Cold War conflict in neighboring Vietnam. Sihanouk states,

my country has adopted these principles [sovereignty, independence, and neutrality] and wishes to apply them to the fullest extent. In doing so, she only requests an absolute reciprocity. She requests that her independence, her integrity, her security, her traditions and political ideology be not threatened.⁴²

Fifield surmises, “Strict neutrality in the national interest was essential for a small state like Cambodia whose role must be moral based on psychological and political rather than military or economic strength.”⁴³ Cambodia simply could not afford to actively engage its fledgling military in *both* the domestic *and* international arenas.

Choosing to exploit personal diplomacy to the greatest extent possible, Sihanouk sought to maintain strained ties with Washington through-out the late 1950s and 1960s; concurrently, he endeavored to establish secret relations with Cambodia’s historic rival in the region—the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Sihanouk believed that Cambodia’s

⁴⁰ Thion, “The Pattern of Cambodian Politics,” 154.

⁴¹ Russell H. Fifield, *The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945–1958* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), 392.

⁴² Sihanouk felt so strongly about such ideals, he resigned from political office when he perceived aggressive U.S. policies were attempting to subvert Cambodian sovereignty. However, within a few weeks, U.S. Secretary of State John F. Dulles was able to calm Cambodian fears, and Sihanouk resumed his official duties. Fifield, *The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia: 1945–1958*, 393.

⁴³ Ibid., 395.

national sovereignty, as well as his hold on the nation, could be maintained by deftly balancing the warring powers.⁴⁴ However, Sihanouk's inability to effectively balance domestic grievances in concert with international politics would prove to be his downfall.

Sihanouk succumbed to the mounting pressures of internal social and political unrest, coupled with transnational regional conflict. Regarding domestic turmoil, Elizabeth Becker writes, "In the end, Sihanouk created his own personal hell, in part because of his 'rampage' against the communists, which killed far more innocent villagers than true communists, who were still few in number."⁴⁵ Furthermore, by the late 1960s, most of Cambodia's rice (the staple of the country and the cornerstone of the economy) was being illicitly sold to North Vietnamese troops transiting along Cambodia's eastern border. In order to keep men under arms, Sihanouk authorized the army to harvest and store whatever rice could be found in private fields, bringing troops and farmers in many provinces to blows.⁴⁶ A failing economy, together with growing social and political unrest, created a permissive environment for a North Vietnamese-backed insurgency to fully emerge in southeastern Cambodia. Conversely, as the communist insurgency gained strength in the east, anti-Vietnamese sentiment simmered to the boiling point in Phnom Penh. Many politicians felt that neutrality had simply been the *wrong* path for Cambodia to follow in such a complex security environment.

C. "THE BLACK PAPA": PRESIDENT LON NOL⁴⁷

Cambodia's policy of strict neutrality would be replaced by one which favored renewed ties with the west—particularly with the United States. Becker writes, "From the [post-Sihanouk] start, the republic staked its legitimacy on a vow to rid the country of the threat from the Vietnamese communists. As head of the armed forces, Lon Nol

⁴⁴ David Chandler, *A History of Cambodia* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 195.

⁴⁵ Elizabeth Becker, *When the War Was Over* (New York: Public Affairs, 1986), 110.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 104; Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, 201.

⁴⁷ Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 127.

automatically became the figure charged with fulfilling that promise.”⁴⁸ Lon Nol did not have to look far for potential allies.

Cambodia’s middle class abhorred Sihanouk’s management of the national economy, as well as his attempts to establish ties with North Vietnam. David Chandler writes,

These men [primarily from the Sino-Cambodian Middle Class] thought Sihanouk’s style embarrassing and his economic policies disastrous. Many of them, like most of the army officer corps, regretted Cambodia’s rupture with the United States and objected to the fact that the nationalization of imports and exports had moved this profitable sector of the economy into the hands of government officials.⁴⁹

Non-Khmer businessmen found themselves on the periphery during Sihanouk’s reign; by mid-March 1970, these men were able to collectively pressure the National Assembly into deposing Sihanouk, and installing a triumvirate composed of Lon Nol, Sirik Matak, and Cheng Heng.⁵⁰

Under the control of the decidedly pro-Western triumvirate, the Khmer Republic quickly severed diplomatic ties with Hanoi, and re-established relations with Washington.⁵¹ Obviously, this was dramatic departure from the neutrality espoused by Sihanouk. Becker writes, “The North Vietnamese now asserted that Cambodia was no longer neutral, pointing to Lon Nol’s entente with South Vietnam as proof. [Therefore,] Cambodia was an active participant in the war.”⁵² North Vietnamese forces increased the scale of military operations along Cambodia’s border, and U.S. forces responded in kind.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 117.

⁴⁹ Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, 195.

⁵⁰ United States Department of the Army, *Cambodia: A Country Study*, ed. Russell A. Ross (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1990), 43. Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 117.

⁵¹ Becker claims that North Vietnamese diplomats were expelled from the country with-in nine days of the coup. Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., 118.

Such operations ultimately drove North Vietnamese forces deep inside the newly established republic.⁵³

Conflict between soldiers and farmers over the recent rice harvest reignited as battle-worn, starving Cambodian and North Vietnamese units sought refuge from an unrelenting American air campaign. As many as 40,000 rural Cambodians descended on the capitol in order to demand the reinstatement of Sihanouk, and ostensibly the reassertion of Cambodia's neutrality.⁵⁴ However, their cries would fall on deaf ears. Between 1970 and 1975, Khmer Republic forces would impotently attempt to consolidate power through-out the rural provinces, most of which were already under the tight control of Khmer Rouges cadres.⁵⁵

Ultimately, Lon Nol's belief in the occult would prove to be the army's undoing. Baker writes, "[Lon Nol] intervened with orders to wage a holy war, reordered battle plans according to predictions of his personal astrologer, restructured military campaigns in order to capture holy monuments rather than enemy positions."⁵⁶ Depleted after two unsuccessful operations against communist forces operating well with-in Cambodia's territorial boundaries (i.e., Operations Chenla I and Chenla II), the Cambodian military was forced to give up Lon Nol's "holy war."⁵⁷ The republic's capital, Phnom Penh, fell to communist Cambodian insurgent forces on the morning of April 17, 1975.

⁵³ The North Vietnamese even shifted their headquarters from the border to areas further inside Cambodian territorial boundaries in order to counter pro-western influences. United States Army, *Cambodia*, xxx, 44–45.

⁵⁴ United States Army, *Cambodia*, 43.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 44.

⁵⁶ Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 124.

⁵⁷ Chenla I was conducted in August 1970 against North Vietnamese forces operating along the Phnom Penh–Skuon highway. Chenla II was conducted almost exactly one year later, along Highway Six, running between Phnom Penh and Kompong Thom. Ibid., 130–132.

D. “THE ORIGINAL CAMBODIAN”: SOLATH SAR (POL POT)⁵⁸

Ben Kiernan writes, “From the ashes of rural Cambodia arose Pol Pot’s Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK).”⁵⁹ After almost a decade of armed conflict, and spurred by the promise of a return to an idealized Khmer empire, rural Cambodian youth from the eastern provinces flocked to arms in defense of the CPK, a phenomenon evidenced by the dramatic growth of the Khmer Rouge through-out the early to mid-1970s. Becker writes,

The Khmer Rouge combined appeals to the Khmer national pride with communist prescriptions for greater economic and political justice. It was the first time in Cambodia’s history that the rural people were being asked to play a significant role in a social movement, and the effect was profound.⁶⁰

Once again, Cambodia’s politicians would gamble the state’s resources on regime survival; this time, it would come at the wholly unnecessary expense of up to 3 million men, women, and children.

Born in 1928, Solath Sar spent much of his adolescence in Phnom Penh’s royal compound.⁶¹ Kiernan writes, “Few Cambodian childhoods were so removed from their vernacular culture.”⁶² The author explains, “The palace compound was closeted and conservative, the old King a French puppet.”⁶³ Spending much of his time among French colonial administrators, young Solath Sar was not only exposed to colonial government procedures but also to persistent colonial bigotry, neither of which would positively shape his personal / political point-of-view.

⁵⁸ “The Original Cambodian” was Solath Sar’s nom de plume during the 1950s. Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 11.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 19.

⁶⁰ Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 137.

⁶¹ Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 19.

⁶² Ibid., 10.

⁶³ Ibid.

As an adult, Solath Sar was exposed to French, and later North Vietnamese communist rhetoric. He was an active member of the French Communist Party during his failed academic stint at a Parisian university.⁶⁴ Upon his return to Cambodia in 1953, he accompanied his brother, Saloth Chhay, to multiple meetings between Cambodian and North Vietnamese communists anxious to spread the ideology through-out fragmented Indochina.⁶⁵ Eventually, Cambodia's communist element would splinter from the rest of Indochinese communist movement, taking Solath Sar with them.

By the early 1970s, Solath Sar found himself as the Khmer Rouge's "first vice president and chief of the *military* conduct of the war" against the North Vietnamese forces then-present in the eastern provinces.⁶⁶ Following cessation of U.S.–Vietnamese hostilities in 1973, Solath Sar shifted his orientation from one primarily anti-Vietnamese to one generally anti-Non-Khmer Rouge. Despite extensive U.S. aircraft interdiction, the Khmer Rouge was able to exercise almost near complete control of the agricultural production of several rural provinces, and blunt not one but several Khmer Republic ground campaigns. Even before the fall of Phnom Pen, "the Khmer Rouge [had] ordered everyone into their zones grouped into strict cooperatives, fortresses that locked up the people, the harvest, and all material possessions for the exclusive use of the party and the revolution."⁶⁷

Kiernan writes, "[Democratic Kampuchean] policies deprived peasants of three of the most cherished features of their lifestyle: land, family, and religion."⁶⁸ The author clarifies,

Religion was suppressed in the name of conservation. All religious and social celebrations were prohibited, and Buddhism was derided as backward and feudal. Marriage was more or less outlawed, so the party

⁶⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 139.

⁶⁷ Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 148.

⁶⁸ Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime*, 167.

could induct young men and women into the army more easily. Gaiety was suspect.⁶⁹

Cambodians were left with few options: plant rice...or plant land mines.

As early as April 1975, Cambodians of all ethnic groups and social classes were forcibly moved from the cities to the countryside in order to supplement the rural workforce. According to many CPK officials, as well as some foreign observers, the de-urbanization of Cambodia was necessary to re-establish rice production to pre-Cold War levels; however, the de-urbanization of Cambodia also allowed the CPK to conduct business without the fetters of a domestic body-politic.⁷⁰

Focused almost solely on the survival of the regime, the CPK failed to provide even the most basic of human needs. Kiernan writes,

The Center's quest for total domestic and substantial regional power by massive military build-up had indentured Cambodia's economy to China's indefinitely. Domestically, Democratic Kampuchea's population was also a bonded workforce, unpaid and lacking even a guarantee of subsistence rations.⁷¹

The movement of over two million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) exasperated conditions in the countryside. Having initially forfeited the majority of their food stores to North Vietnamese forces, the farmers of the outlying provinces were now required to not only feed themselves but an additional two million others. Furthermore, they were also ordered to contribute the majority of their harvest to CPK monitored aggregation centers in order to fuel the one-sided arms race between Cambodia and the rest of the region. The social and economic burden simply proved to be too much for the Cambodian people. Ultimately, "between 1 million and 3 million persons died because of purges, beatings, malnourishment, and overwork."⁷²

⁶⁹ Ibid., 153.

⁷⁰ Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, 210-211.

⁷¹ Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, 163.

⁷² United States Department of the Army, *Cambodia: A Country Study*, pg. xxxii. David Chandler, et. al., "Cambodia since 1975," in *The Emergence of Modern Southeast Asia*, ed. Norman G. Owen (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), 484.

Following numerous skirmishes in the waning months of 1978, 120,000 battle-hardened Vietnamese troops streamed across the Cambodian–Vietnamese border and brought the reign of the Khmer Rouge to a quick and violent end.⁷³ Pol Pot, along with thousands of other Khmer Rouge cadre, retreated into the hinterlands. Peace would remain elusive for Cambodia; Vietnam would maintain a presence in the country until 1991.

E. “THE JUNGLE FIGHTER”: PRIME MINISTER HUN SEN

1. A Jungle Fighter’s Rise to Power

One man would emerge from the turmoil of the 1970s to rule modern Cambodia—Hun Sen. Becker writes,

His short adult life had been spent entirely in a military uniform. Since the age of sixteen, when he dropped out of a Phnom Penh high school and joined the Khmer Rouge movement, Hun Sen had gone from one battle to another, suffering five serious injuries in the murderous, chaotic revolution.⁷⁴

Despite the loss of one eye while taking Phnom Penh in the name of the regime, he was forced to escape to neighboring Vietnam in 1977 in order to avoid execution at the hands of Khmer Rouge enforcers.

Unarguably charismatic, the former Khmer Rouge soldier was able to quickly earn the favor of the Vietnamese leadership.⁷⁵ In fact, Hun Sen was not only able to win over the Vietnamese but also Soviet diplomat Igor Rogachev, who would adopt him as a sort of protégé.⁷⁶ The well-tutored former guerrilla would initially be posted as the head of the diplomatic branch of the newly installed Peoples Republic of Kampuchea (PRK).

⁷³ Sihanouk, *War and Hope*, xxvii.

⁷⁴ Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 441.

⁷⁵ Evan Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 47.

⁷⁶ Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 441–442.

Hun Sen assumed a political office with no historic precedent to dictate the roles and responsibilities of the position. Gottesman writes,

The Khmer Rouge's extermination of civil servants had nearly erased a national memory of how government worked. With few experienced bureaucrats and with ministers who themselves had no administrative background, the civil service succumbed to the natural bureaucratic tendency to appropriate power and assume overlapping responsibilities.⁷⁷

This simple fact accounts for much of the political control witnessed today; Hun Sen was able to shape the Cambodian political landscape accordingly, and at leisure.

Hun Sen proved adept at "taking charge of a country that the rest of the world thought of only in terms of violence and open conflict."⁷⁸ Standing largely on the shoulders of a well-educated Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) staff, and closely tutored by Vietnamese and Russian diplomats, he was promoted from Deputy Prime Minister to Prime Minister (PM) in January 1985.⁷⁹ Almost immediately, the PM shifted the focus of the state towards economic stability, creating a number of ministries whose purpose was to repair the damage of the unsound economic policies of the previous administrations.⁸⁰

However, Hun Sen's good intentions would ultimately prove to hinder socio-political progress. Gottesman writes, "Although the new civil servants were generally inept at regulating the country's increasingly private economy, they were able to intervene in day-to-day matters, collecting taxes and bribes and passing the revenues on to their superiors. The state thus turned into a sprawling and heterogeneous network of ministries, agencies, and provincial and local administrations whose members adhered to the rules of patronage."⁸¹

⁷⁷ Ibid., 50.

⁷⁸ Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge*, 205.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 208–209.

⁸⁰ Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge*, 215.

⁸¹ Ibid., 211.

Faced with the need for economic self-sufficiency in the post-Cold War world, Hun Sen and the PRK looked to re-establish ties with the region, and the world. Even before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Hun Sen attempted to preemptively co-opt Sihanouk prior to his return to Cambodia. Gottesman writes, “[Hun Sen] wanted to drive a wedge between the supposedly adaptable prince and his seemingly intractable Cambodian and foreign allies.”⁸² Moreover, Hun Sen took significant steps at moving Cambodia’s economic outlook from “the left to the right.”⁸³ This was in direct opposition to communist ideology; however, as Gottesman points out, “By encouraging competition within the state sector, Hun Sen and the like-minded leaders were apt to consider the resources at their disposal as assets to be exploited for profit. For Hun Sen and much of the rest of the leadership, a permissive system of this sort was the key to consolidating power. It created networks of happy officials whose loyalty the regime could count on, even after the Vietnamese withdrew and Sihanouk returned.”⁸⁴

Hun Sen’s patronage network would ultimately cement his position in government. The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) made significant strides in mentoring Cambodia’s disenfranchised, as well as monitoring a democratic election in which almost over 4 million Cambodians participated.⁸⁵ However, Cambodia’s initial foray into democracy was not very promising for the Cambodian People’s Party (CPP); the party did not gain a majority of the seats in the 1993 elections. Frieson writes, “Hun Sen’s campaign was focused more on what the party had accomplished in the past than on what it would do in the future, which was not reassuring to many Cambodians, who were sickened by official corruption, grinding poverty, and

⁸² Ibid., 278.

⁸³ Ibid., 279–280.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 300.

⁸⁵ The United Nations, *The United Nations and Cambodia: 1991–1995* (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1995), 44.

the lack of an open political environment.”⁸⁶ Hun Sen failed to comprehend the overarching lessons of the Sihanouk, Lon Nol, and Pol Pot regimes.

Ultimately, the CPP was required to strong-arm the urban political base in order to achieve political consolidation. Hun Sen was able to convince fellow CPP members by mid-1997 that opposition party members had been “colluding with the Khmer Rouge.”⁸⁷ Kate Frieson argues that any opposition to the CPP was portrayed as detrimental to the nation-state; she writes,

[the CPP] was incapable of regarding opposition political parties as legitimate rivals because it meticulously constructed a view of the opposition as the ‘enemy’ (*khmang*) and reproduced this view so thoroughly in its propaganda and its political chain of command that actions taken against political parties were considered equivalent to patriotic duty.⁸⁸

In the military, one’s patriot duty was often confused with one’s political affiliation. Lewis M. Stern writes, “Between 1995 and 1997, none of the elements that were allowed to remain armed and to enter into the formation of a national army adopted a form of thinking that would have enabled the creation of a single, coherent national military.”⁸⁹ According to Stern, “The KPNLF and ANS, and Hun Sen, continued to speak in terms of their own interests and organizations, making claims for a fair and balanced equation for selecting senior generals, promoting general officers, and making defense policy and military strategy that served narrow organizational (not national) interests.”⁹⁰ In contrast, under the prying eyes of the United Nations, the existing cadres of PRK

⁸⁶ Kate Frieson, “The Politics of Getting the Vote in Cambodia,” in *Propoganda, Politics, and Violence in Cambodia*, eds. Steve Heder and Judy Ledgerwood (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), 184.

⁸⁷ A group essentially identified as spoilers during the UNTAC period. Peou, *Government and Politics of Southeast Asia*, 56.

⁸⁸ Frieson, “The Politics of Getting the Vote in Cambodia,” 184.

⁸⁹ Lewis M. Stern, “U.S.–Cambodian Defense Relations: Defining New Possibilities,” *Strategic Forum* 251 (December 2009), 3.

⁹⁰ Stern, “U.S.–Cambodian Defense Relations,” 3.

officials were able to refine their bureaucratic processes; KPRA officers were often selected over their KPNLAF and ANS counterparts.⁹¹

By the first months of new millennium, patriotism and political affiliation had finally aligned under the CPP banner. Sorpong Peou writes, “Hun Sen got what he always wanted—a monopoly of power (his politico-military victory over Ranariddh and the Khmer Rouge rebels), the UN seat for his government, and Cambodian membership in ASEAN.”⁹² Prime Minister Hun Sen viewed the succession of victories as proof of the CPP’s strength in the domestic arena.⁹³

2. Giving Cambodia a Voice in International Affairs

Having consolidated power, Hun Sen began to give Cambodia a voice in the global commons. Rising above the cacophony of other developing nations, he initially called for the reform of international and region political and economic organizations. In early 2000, at the first G77 South Summit held in Havana, Cuba, he gave the following address:

[W]e should pay much attention to strengthening cooperation among countries in the South. G 77 countries should join forces into one block to protect the interests of developing countries on the international arena, especially in the United Nations and at other international negotiations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO). To this end, we have to consider measures to promote and improve our world body. Cambodia voices support for the reform of the United Nations. We understand that it is necessary for all of us to strictly uphold the Charter of the United Nations and strengthen the role of the Security Council in the peace-keeping process in the world. At the same time, we believe that developing countries should enhance their role in charting the future of the world within the framework of the UN Security Council.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Ibid., 2.

⁹² Sorpong Peou, *Intervention and Change in Cambodia* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2000), 415.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen, “First G77 South Summit Keynote Address,” *Embassy of Cambodia in Washington, D.C.* (April 12, 2000). Available online at: <http://www.embassy.org/cambodia/press/1442000.html> , accessed September 16, 2010.

Hun Sen's call for Security Council reform would be echoed by all of the G77 nations during the 2005 Doha, Qatar conference; Section 22 of the *Doha Charter* states,

We attach high priority to the reform of the United Nations with the objective to strengthen the Organization, so that it can efficiently respond to the current and future challenges affecting the international community, in particular those concerns and interests of developing countries which constitute the vast majority of its membership.⁹⁵

PM Hun Sen's desire to reform international and regional organizations, primarily from with-in, also reflects his desire to influence domestic politics. Speaking at the 7th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, held in Siem Reap in late 2009, the PM stated, "The Kingdom of Cambodia, as a member of ASEAN, has been integrating itself in all sectors according to the concept of globalization in order to strengthen good governance, ensure social stability and the development of national economy, aiming to fully participate in the process of nation building."⁹⁶ However, all that glitters is not gold. Andrew Cock writes,

A formal willingness of the ruling elite to implement effective measures for reform comes and goes. Substantial, coordinated pressure from external actors, and the perception by the ruling elite that they have no other alternative may elicit commitments and acts that can be construed as signs of reform. However, when external pressures ease, when the initiatives of pro-active external actors are worn down, or disputes between external actors can be manipulated, the willingness of the ruling elite to move forward with these reform measures quickly declines.⁹⁷

Reminiscent of criticisms hurled at head-of-state Sihanouk, Steve Heder writes,

Building on his long-held, princely sounding title Samdech, Hun Sen also continued [in 2010] to appropriate the trappings of royalty and increasingly of sacral and supernatural might, such that he was widely seen as the real monarch of the Kingdom of Cambodia, not the secluded

⁹⁵ Second South Summit, "Doha Charter," *Second South Summit of the Group of 77* (June 12, 2005). Available online at: <http://www.g77.org/southsummit2/en/intro.html>, accessed September 17, 2010.

⁹⁶ Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen. "Prime Minister (PM) Hun Sen Speech." *Association of Southeast Asian Nations* (November 17, 2009). Available online at: <http://www.aseansec.org/documents/PM-Hun-Sen-Speech.pdf>, accessed September 16, 2010.

⁹⁷ Andrew Robert Cock, "External Actors and the Relative Autonomy of the Ruling Elite in post-UNTAC Cambodia," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 41 (2010): 262.

King Norodom Sihamoni, son of the retired King Norodom Sihanouk. Hun Sen was portrayed as a military and economic genius; as the reincarnation of the sixteenth-century commoner, Khmer-turned hero-king Sdech Kan; and as a nine-headed *naga* (serpent) with magical powers.”⁹⁸

The current regime’s reversion to more authoritarian measures is due in some measure to the existing patronage system. Ear writes,

Large and generous infusions of aid have enabled the authorities to *not* improve domestic revenue collection, particularly an effective tax collection system (since aid is fungible), which in turn has led to weak state capacity in the post-conflict period, and instead allowed a patronage system of informal revenue collection to blossom in which authorities do not need ‘people,’ just loyalty in the chain of hierarchy.⁹⁹

David Chandler writes,

For most Cambodians, these shifting networks of subordination and control, chosen or imposed, benevolent or otherwise, [mark] the limits of their experience and of the social expectations.”¹⁰⁰ As Ear warns, “Short of a fundamental change in the political system such as regime change, unchecked social instability, or ill health, there is little doubt as to who will run Cambodia through 2010 and far beyond.”¹⁰¹

F. CONCLUSION

Describing the succession of political regimes in Cambodia, Sorpong Peou writes:

Between 1954 and 1991, the country adopted different anti-democratic political systems: paternalistic under Prince Sihanouk, republican under Lon Nol, revolutionary totalitarianism under Pol Pot, and socialist dictatorship under Hun Sen. No one could give the country what it needed most, namely peace, stability and security.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Steve Heder, “Cambodia in 2010,” in *Asian Survey* 51 (January / February 2011), 209.

⁹⁹ Sophal Ear, “The Political Economy of Aid and Regime Legitimacy in Cambodia,” in *Beyond Democracy in Cambodia*, eds. Joakim Öjendal and Mona Lilja (Copenhagen: NAIS Press, 2009), 160.

¹⁰⁰ Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, 106.

¹⁰¹ Sophal Ear, “Cambodia,” in *Regional Outlook: Southeast Asia 2009–2010*, eds. Ian Storey (ISEAS) and Lee Poh Onn (ISEAS) (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009): 23.

¹⁰² Sorpong Peou, “Cambodia: After the Killing Fields,” in *Government and Politics in Southeast Asia*, ed. John Funston (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2001), 69.

Stability, particularly in and around Phnom Penh, proved elusive until the late 1990s; by the early 2000s, a modicum of political and social stability allowed for the gradual emergence of notable economic growth.

Cambodia's ruling elite have taken advantage of the prevailing peace to pursue limited regional objectives, and mitigate international criticism, primarily through the use of "institutional balancing" methods. Less than thirty-six months after being admitted into the organization, Cambodia was the host of "the 8th ASEAN Summit, the ASEAN Plus Three Summit, [and] ASEAN Plus One Summits with China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and with India."¹⁰³ Moreover, Cambodia's willing to host an ASEAN-EU Security Summit in 2009 demonstrates the current government's willingness to look outside of regional arrangements for economic sustainment, and possibly security. However, the utility of regional and international organizations is dependent upon the commitment of the individual member-states. To achieve tangible benefits, a member-state must be more than a gracious host. The next chapter will examine one of Cambodia's more prominent physical contributions to an international organization—peacekeepers.

¹⁰³ ASEAN Secretariat. "Annual Security Outlook 2003: Cambodia," (2003). Available online at: <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/PublicLibrary/Publications/AnnualSecurityOutlook2003/Cambodia/tabta/221/DDefault.aspx>, accessed September 14, 2011.

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III. THE ROLE OF THE ROYAL CAMBODIAN ARMED FORCES

A. INTRODUCTION

The armed forces of Cambodia have always served as “the political leaders’ best instrument in advancing their political interests.”¹⁰⁴ Primarily, such interests have been “...national independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.”¹⁰⁵ Additionally, beginning in the early 1950s, the armed forces of Cambodia have been asked to fulfill a laundry list of extraneous tasks, to include the suppression of social unrest, the repression of political parties deemed to promote values counter to the progress of the state, and the construction of vast public works projects.

By the early 2000s, Cambodian troops were given a new role—peacekeeping. A dramatic departure from previous roles, peacekeeping asked for an almost exclusively internal security orientated force to perform international peace operations. Therefore, peacekeeping also required widespread military reform, and a re-orientation of Cambodia’s military doctrine. Cambodia pursues peacekeeping as a means of accruing the international prestige points necessary for the effective pursuit of “institutional balancing” policies. Moreover, Cambodia seeks to increase its participation in peacekeeping as a means to efficiently affect military reform across a broader section of the military, improve force capacity in multilateral operations, and ultimately gain additional leverage in regional and international organizations.

B. HISTORICAL ROLE OF THE RCAF

The armed forces of Cambodia were initially formed in the tumultuous months of late-Summer 1945, immediately following the withdrawal of Japanese troops. With the demobilization of occupational Imperial Japanese Army (IJA), the French colony found itself under assault from two insurgencies: the Khmer Issarak in the West, and the Khmer

¹⁰⁴ Peou, “Cambodia: After the Killing Fields,” 46.

¹⁰⁵ Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen, *2000 Defense White Paper* (Phnom Penh: Kingdom of Cambodia Ministry of Defense, 2000), Introductory Letter.

People's Liberation Army (KPLA) in the East.¹⁰⁶ In response, Prince Monireth quickly mustered the first battalion of the armed forces of Cambodia from recently demobilized French colonial light infantry non-commissioned officers. Additionally, he established a non-commissioned officer's school in order to train replacements for those recently put under arms, and expected to conduct counter-insurgency operations.¹⁰⁷ By 1947, over 6,000 Cambodians were serving in either the Garde Nationale (GN) or the two Bataillon de Chasseurs Cambodgiens (BdCC).¹⁰⁸

Between the late 1940s and 1952, the GN and BdCC would grow in both size and scope. Initially, GN personnel were under joint French–Cambodian operational control; however, through various formal and informal arrangements, Cambodian battalion commanders and provincial leaders were granted operational autonomy.¹⁰⁹ By the fall of Diem Bien Phu, French colonial military cadre officers could see the writing on the wall—their authority over a force already starting to exhibit autonomous tendencies was, at best, tenuous. Besides, wholly French forces were already stretched far too thin to deal effectively with either the Thai-backed Khmer Issarak insurgency, or the communist Vietnamese-backed KPLA. By delegating operational control of the Cambodian battalions to Cambodian leaders, French military officers could begin to quickly formulate an exit strategy.

The Forces Armées Royales Khmères (FARK) emerged almost immediately following Cambodia's independence from France. Despite a significant internal threat, Cambodia's political elite quickly re-oriented the force from counter-insurgency to border defense in order to ensure post-independence sovereignty. Ross writes, "FARK's mission thus became a defensive one, that is, to insure Cambodia's territorial integrity within the framework of neutrality."¹¹⁰ FARK forces were deployed in large numbers to the hinterlands, particularly along the nation's border with then-partitioned Vietnam.

¹⁰⁶ United States Army, *Cambodia: A Country Study*, 246.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 247.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 248.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 251.

By early 1955, the FARK began to receive promises of military assistance from the United States. The U.S. recognized the potential for the FARK to fulfill security requirements along the Mekong River and its many tributaries. Almost a decade before the Vietnam War, Washington authorized the deployment of a Military Assistance Advisory Group to the Kingdom of Cambodia (MAAG-KC) in order to assess the possibility for the establishment of U.S. bases, and the provision of additional aide and assistance to the FARK.¹¹¹ However, despite close military-to-military relations, diplomatic tensions would ultimately choke off western materiel and financial support.

By 1965, following repeated cross-border incursions by South Vietnamese forces, diplomatic ties between the U.S. and Cambodia were severed, and the FARK were forced to look elsewhere for training and logistics. An omen of things to come, FARK soldiers were presented with a logistics nightmare; Ross writes, “The inevitable results of a variety of [often private] suppliers were mixed equipment inventories.”¹¹² It was with this grab-bag of military equipment, and limited professional training, that the FARK would attempt to repress the emerging Revolutionary Army of Kampuchea (RAK).

In the opening stages of the Cold War era, the force was significantly transformed from a guerrilla force fighting against the Japanese, to a version of gendarme conducting counter-insurgency operations, to a standing army tasked with maintaining territorial integrity. Over the next twenty years, the force would be torn asunder by a multitude of international, regional, and domestic factors.

It would be a former FARK officer, Lon Nol, who would ineffectively attempt to re-orientate the force once again. The re-branded Forces Armées Nationales Khmères (FANK) was tasked with not only maintaining the nation’s already encroached borders but also countering yet another insurgent force rapidly gaining strength in the rural provinces. Realizing a well trained and equipped force was required to positively affect the domestic security environment, Lon Nol was able to rebuild many of the diplomatic bridges burnt by Sihanouk; however, despite renewed assistance, the FANK continued to

¹¹¹ United States Army, *Cambodia: A Country Study*, 248.

¹¹² Ibid., 253.

be hampered by severe logistical shortfalls and incompetent operational leadership.¹¹³ Moreover, by 1971, the FANK was facing not one but three separate hostile elements operating with-in the country: the North Vietnamese Army (NVA); the RAK; and an insurgent group backed by the recently deposed Sihanouk, the Gouvernement Royal d'Union Nationale du Kampuchéa (GRUNK).

By late 1972, RAK and GRUNK units combined to form the Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces (CPNLAF). Intense, prolonged U.S. bombing attacks against CPNLAF targets in eastern Cambodia only strengthened the group's resolve, and swelled its ranks with disgruntled farmers and displaced urbanites. Becker writes, "The Army had become the fraternity that bound together the uprooted peasants and intellectuals who had abandoned their farms or their city careers. Proving oneself in battle was as great as any for a revolution."¹¹⁴ This armed mob of peasants and scholars rapidly dismantled the country in the name of revolution.

During the reign of the Khmer Rouge, RAK battalions (the label a nostalgic nod to its Khmer Rouge roots) were assigned to various administrative sectors throughout the country.¹¹⁵ However, such fragmentation would also prove to be the RAK's downfall. Ross writes,

Troops from one zone frequently were sent to another zone to enforce discipline. It was such efforts to discipline zonal secretaries and their dissident or ideologically impure cadres that gave rise to the purges that were to decimate the RAK ranks, to undermine the moral of the victorious army, and to generate the seeds of rebellion [against the Khmer Rouge].¹¹⁶

Valor in battle gave way to unprecedented corruption in peace. Petty infighting between RAK commanders and Khmer Rouge leaders undermined cohesion, and paved the way for yet another armed group to assume control of the country; this time, the conquering force would come from outside the country.

¹¹³ United States Army, *Cambodia: A Country Study*, 257.

¹¹⁴ Becker, *When the War Was Over*, 147.

¹¹⁵ United States Army, *Cambodia: A Country Study*, 261–262.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

Following the Vietnamese invasion of December 1978, the Vietnamese Army assumed command of any remaining vestiges of the state's armed forces, which was subsequently labeled by the Vietnamese as the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Army (KPRA), and finally by Cambodians themselves as the Cambodian People's Armed Forces (CPAF). With the Vietnamese Army shouldering much of the security burden, the CPAF was allowed to revert back to a system of economic predation prevalent during the Sihanouk, Lon Nol, and even Pol Pot regimes. Gottesman writes, "In the field Cambodian military units operated under the direct control of the Vietnamese command."¹¹⁷ However, not all aspects of a CPAF soldier's life could be regulated by a foreign command and control structure. The author continues, "Where Cambodian units operated independently, they [exclusively] guarded roads and bridges—in effect, acting as tax collectors for their commanding officers or local authorities."¹¹⁸ Moreover, various CPAF units in the hinterlands took advantage of their relative autonomy by quickly setting up large (and illicit) fishing, timber, and even transportation operations.¹¹⁹ In turn, CPAF officers were able to take the profits from such enterprises and make significant contributions to the local patronage structure. Gottesman writes, "In strategically important provinces like Battambang, military chiefs were appointed as [Communist] Party secretaries."¹²⁰

The People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) did little to improve its standing with the populace. The government implemented a conscription policy in order to stem the growing insurgencies of pro-Sihanouk and former Khmer Rouge forces. Given "Certificates of Sacrifice," all young men between the ages of 17 and 25 were to serve in the CPAF for a period of no-less-than five years.¹²¹ Utterly counterproductive, the measure undermined the effectiveness of the CPAF. Having spent most of their life

¹¹⁷ Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge*, 229.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., pg. 229.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., pg. 230.

¹²⁰ Ibid., pg. 229.

¹²¹ Ibid., pg. 227–229.

dodging Vietnamese artillery rounds, Cambodian bullets, and American bombs, most Cambodians went to considerable lengths to avoid conscription.¹²²

In contrast to the conscripted CPAF, several armed groups opposed the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. Backed to a large extent to the People's Republic of China, the post-RAK National Army of Democratic Kampuchea (NADK) was able to carry out a fairly effective, and rather far reaching insurgency, against North Vietnamese and KPRA forces. Conversely, despite significant financial aid from numerous Southeast Asian nations, re-emergent KPNLAF forces were ultimately unable to mount effective Thai–Cambodia cross-border operations due to command and control issues.¹²³ Finally, the risk-adverse Armée Nationale Sihanoukiste (ANS) provided limited direct assistance to the KPNLAF.¹²⁴ Amounting to almost 50,000 personnel, these forces would not begin the demobilization process until the latter months of 1991.¹²⁵

By the end of the 1990s, Cambodia was less prepared to meet security challenges than it had been at the time of independence; most of the RCAF was underequipped, absurdly underpaid, and untrained in modern military tactics, techniques, and procedures. This force was obviously not the force to represent a nation calling for greater regional and international integration. Stern writes,

The Cambodian military...recognized the need to integrate the lessons of defense reforms, develop a new doctrine and modern organizational practices, sort out the issues surrounding the emerging need to improve maritime security capacity, and commit to multilateral cooperation in this and other areas of defense reform.¹²⁶

Cambodia's political–military elite called for reform in order to facilitate institutional balancing, improve economic relations, and decrease the cost of what many considered

¹²² For consideration: the average pay for a KPRA soldier was approximately \$4.00 per month, plus a small supplement of rice. Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge*, 229. United States Army, *Cambodia: A Country Study*, 293.

¹²³ United States Army, *Cambodia: A Country Study*, 275.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ The United Nations, *The United Nations and Cambodia*, 9.

¹²⁶ Stern, "U.S.–Cambodian Defense Relations," 2.

an unnecessary large force. The rank and file of the RCAF loudly called for reform in hopes of achieving even minor quality of life improvements.

New missions began to appear on the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces' (RCAF) task list early in the new millennium. Written in 2000, the nation's first defense white paper included the maintenance of "peace, stability and social security."¹²⁷ By 2006, this particular task set had expanded to the international arena; the cover of that year's white paper explicitly provides three overarching tasks for the force: security, development, and international cooperation.¹²⁸ What spurred the doctrinal change—from one with an internal orientation to one with decidedly external nuances? Moreover, how could a force historically used for internal security be re-orientated to meet external security cooperation objectives?

By the time the second white paper went to the presses, the U.S. led "Global War on Terror" was in full swing, and developing states found an audience with western powers anxious to thwart potential transnational security threats. Speaking at an OXCEL Honorary Fellowship awards banquet, PM Hun Sen provided the following context for reform:

While the concepts of the security have gradually changed from national security to human security, from common security to cooperative security and integration, the roles of the military have more burdens on their current duties with new policies in order to respond to the emergent needs and threats. All of these required the reformation and renovation in the military aimed at providing new and modern skills, operations, [and] cooperations [sic] for immediate response.¹²⁹

According to Hun Sen, the changing security environment necessitated the reformation of the RCAF. Additionally, given the transnational nature of the emerging security threat, regional and international security cooperation became a necessary departure from the strict neutrality of the past. Tea Banh (2006) writes, "While overcoming complicated

¹²⁷ Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen, *2000 Defense White Paper*, Introductory Letter.

¹²⁸ Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen, *2006 Defense White Paper*, Phnom Penh: Kingdom of Cambodia Ministry of Defense (2006), Cover.

¹²⁹ Nem Sowath, *Revolution in a Distant Village* (Phnom Penh: Reahoo, 2009), 170.

obstacles in its reform process, the RCAF is promoting the prestige of the Kingdom of Cambodia in the international arena and this is unprecedented in the history of Cambodia.”¹³⁰

C. RE-ORIENTING DOCTRINE AND TRAINING

Reform can be a costly affair. Through the implementation of a somewhat discontinuous demobilization program, the military has decreased in overall size from over 200,000 uniformed personnel in the mid-1990s to approximately 124,300 personnel today.¹³¹ However, even this number has been difficult for the government to justify. In 1996, forces under the command of Ieng Sary were successful in neutralizing a significant portion of Khmer Rouge fighters in the vicinity of Pailin.¹³² Benny Widyono continues, “Finally, in 2003, with the death of Pol Pot and the surrender of its remaining leaders, the Khmer Rouge movement was finally dissolved.”¹³³

In the absence of a quantifiable internal security threat, the Royal Cambodian Government has had to refocus the RCAF. Cambodia currently spends about \$300M USD, or 12.5% of its annual budget, on simply sustaining the outmoded force.¹³⁴ Monies for modernization therefore have had to come from outside the International Monetary Fund (IMF) monitored budget.

Recalling Sotomayor, “[Peacekeeping] can provide a means to transit from one doctrine to another without provoking large budgetary and operational cuts—justifying

¹³⁰ Tea Banh is referring to the 2006 deployment of Cambodian de-miners in support of United Nations Mine Action Office (UNMAO) initiatives. Tea Banh, Defense White Paper, Ministry of Defense (2006), Introduction.

¹³¹ Of that number, approximately 45,000 personnel serve only in a limited, reserve or “provincial” capacity. Taylor and Francis Group, “Chapter Six: Asia,” *The Military Balance*, Vol. 111, No. 1 (2011), pg. 229. Available online at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/04597222.2011.559837>, accessed August 16, 2011.

¹³² Benny Widyono, “The Spectre of the Khmer Rouge over Cambodia,” *UN Chronicle* 45 (2008), 26.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ In years prior, Cambodia has earmarked almost twice that number for the military, only to be chastised by the IMF. Jane’s, “Defense Budget (Cambodia),” *Jane’s Online* (October 19, 2010). Available online at: <http://articles.janes.com/articles/Janes-Sentinel-Security-Assessment-Southeast-Asia/Defence-budget-Cambodia.html>, accessed August 25, 2011.

some levels of expenditure at a time when imminent internal security threats are eroding.”¹³⁵ Cambodia quickly turned to peacekeeping as a means of re-orientating the force; with-in months of the destruction of the Khmer Rouge, RCAF officers deployed as United Nations Military Observers (UNMOs) to the United Nations Mission in Sudan.

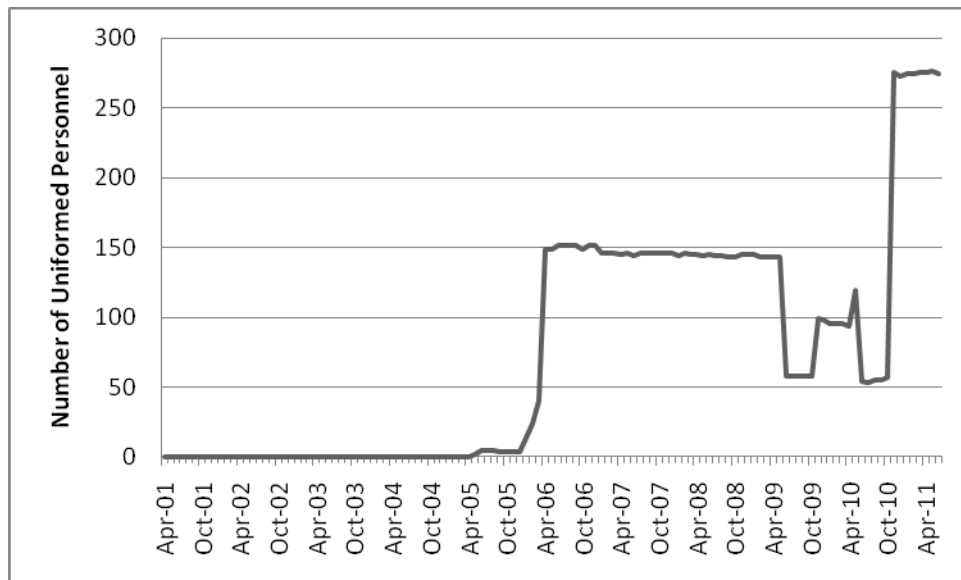


Figure 1. Cambodia’s Contribution of Uniformed Personnel to UN-PKO from April 2001 through June 2011.¹³⁶

Cambodia began to play a more active role in the promotion of peacekeeping as a means of reform in early 2009. In June of that year, near the ruins of Angkor Wat, it hosted the 3rd ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Peacekeeping Experts’ Meeting. Co-chaired by LTG Nem Sowath and the Japanese Ministry of Defense Director General of International Affairs Mr. Hiroshi Oe, several presentations were given under the banner of “Enhancing the Regional Capacity to Participate in United Nations Peacekeeping

¹³⁵ Sotomayor, “Why Some States Participate in UN Peace Missions,” 177.

¹³⁶ Data compiled from multiple United Nations peacekeeping strength reports available online at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>.

Operations.”¹³⁷ The United States Pacific Command (USPACOM)’s Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) brief, as well as the People’s Republic of China’s overview of its new Peacekeeping Training Center, highlighted an emerging dynamic in the region.¹³⁸ In fact, one entire session of the 2009 ARF was devoted to peacekeeping training centers, which included presentations on the International Association of Peace Training Centers (IAPTC), as well as the Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Centre (MPTC) and the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK).¹³⁹

In keeping with this global trend, and with considerable U.S. financial aid, Cambodia opened its own peacekeeping training center on May 3, 2010. Completed largely by Cambodian laborers, “on time, within scope, and to the agreed standards,” this \$1,800,000 USD facility, located in Kampong Speu Province, is designed to facilitate approximately 675 personnel.¹⁴⁰ However, due to budgetary constraints, utilities such as water and electricity are provided only when other nations send troops to the site in support of either bi-lateral or multi-lateral training exercises.

The opening of the peacekeeping training center brought with it significant controversy, with the loudest opposition coming from Human Rights Watch (HRW) staffers. HRW Deputy Asia Director Phil Robertson is quoted as saying, “For the [U.S. Department of Defense] Pentagon and [U.S.] State Department to approve construction of facilities for a high-profile regional peacekeeping exercise at the base of an abusive Cambodian military unit—whether it subsequently changed names or not—is

¹³⁷ Notably, Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Prak Sokhonn provided the opening remarks, citing Cambodia’s transformation from a nation with a U.N. mission to a nation supporting other missions abroad. ASEAN Secretariat, “Co-Chairs Summary Report of the 3rd ARF Peacekeeping Experts’ Meeting,” *ASEAN Regional Forum* (June 26, 2009). Available online at: <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/PublicLibrary/ARFChairmansStatementsandReports/tabid/66/Default.aspx>, accessed September 15, 2010.

¹³⁸ ASEAN, “Co-Chairs Summary Report.”

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Theodore Allegra, “Remarks by Charge D’Affaires Theodore Allegra at the Opening of Peacekeeping Training Center,” *Embassy of the United States in Cambodia* (May 3, 2010). Available online at: http://cambodia.usembassy.gov/sp_050310.html, accessed September 16, 2010.

outrageous.”¹⁴¹ Robertson continues, “The U.S. undermines its protests against the Cambodian government for rampant rights abuses like forced evictions when it showers international attention and funds on military units involved in grabbing land and other human rights violations.”¹⁴² Those sentiments were echoed by *Asia Times* contributor Clifford McCoy,

In a July 8 report, Human Rights Watch (HRW), a [U.S.]-based rights lobby, alleged that many RCAF units selected to participate in the [concurrently held exercise ANGKOR SENTINEL 2010] had abysmal [human] rights records. HRW said that by allowing the controversial units to participate in the drills, the U.S. had undermined its own commitment to the promotion of human rights in Cambodia.¹⁴³

Both United States and Cambodian officials were quick to dismiss allegations of corruption. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton’s visit to the Kingdom in late 2010 “[highlighted] the United States commitment to enhanced, sustained, and comprehensive engagement in Southeast Asia, as well as [the United States’] desire to assist the Cambodian people in their efforts to recover fully from decades of conflict, to achieve political and legal reforms, and to strengthen economic development.”¹⁴⁴ Moreover, in 2010, the United States provided over \$70 million USD in financial aid to the nation.¹⁴⁵ Increasingly, Washington has come to view the Kingdom as an important ally in regional counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism operations.

Held at a considerable distance from Phnom Penh, ANGKOR SENTINEL 2011 garnered far less attention than the previous year’s exercise. The significantly scaled

¹⁴¹ Human Rights Watch, “Cambodia: Halt U.S. Aid to Abusive Military Units,” *Human Rights Watch* (July 8, 2010). Available online at: <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/07/08/cambodia-halt-us-aid-abusive-military-units>, accessed September 17, 2010.

¹⁴² Human Rights Watch, “Cambodia: Halt U.S. Aid to Abusive Military Units.”

¹⁴³ Clifford McCoy, “U.S. and Cambodia in Controversial Lockstep,” *Asia Times Online* (July 31, 2010). Available online at: http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/LG31Ae01.html, accessed September 15, 2010.

¹⁴⁴ United States Department of State, “Secretary Clinton’s October 30-November 1 Visit to Cambodia,” Washington D.C.: Office of the Spokesman (October 30, 2010). Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/10/150193.htm>, accessed September 22, 2011.

¹⁴⁵ United States Department of State, “Background Note: Cambodia,” Washington D.C.: Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (August 10, 2011). Available online at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2732.htm>, accessed September 22, 2011.

down Command Post Exercise (CPX) focused on the role of a battalion level contingent staff operating in a United Nations peacekeeping mission. Alongside Utah Army National Guard soldiers, and under the guidance of Center for Civil–Military Relations instructors and active duty military Naval Postgraduate School students, amalgamated RCAF staffs conducted multiple planning exercises, mock civil–military liaison meetings, and press conferences.

D. THE RCAF AND UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Generally, Cambodian peacekeepers have been employed in roles which “are compatible with their dual [internal–external] doctrine.”¹⁴⁶ Specifically, RCAF officers and engineers have been deployed in small numbers in support of the United Nations Mission in Sudan / South Sudan (UNMIS / UNMISS), as well as the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). In even smaller numbers, RCAF personnel have been sent in support of United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT).

RCAF engineers in Sudan / South Sudan have garnered several accolades. The Director of the UN Mine Action Office (UNMAO) in Khartoum, Nigel Forrestal, recently sent a letter of appreciation to LTG Sem Sovanny, stating,

We were particularly impressed with the RCAF remote deployment to the Maban where the team destroyed over 900 UXO, 3 AP [anti-personnel] and 4 AT [anti-tank] mines, including 1 AT mine which was found in the middle of the village. We understand that of the 50 RCAF engineers in Sudan deployed to Maban for an extended period; this is a commendable effort.¹⁴⁷

Forrestal continues, “It was with great pleasure I read about RCAF being accredited by the CMAA [Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Authority] to carryout operations

¹⁴⁶ Sotomayor, “Why Some States Participate in UN Peace Operations,” 177.

¹⁴⁷ Official Cambodian figures state that up to 77 million square meters of Sudanese land had been cleared by RCAF engineers by the summer of 2010. Embassy of Cambodia, “Cambodia to Dispatch Peacekeeping Troops to Lebanon,” *Embassy of Cambodia in New Zealand* (June 29, 2010). Available online at: <http://www.embassyofcambodia.org.nz/June292010/June292010.htm>, accessed August 25, 2011. Nigel Forrestal, “RCAF Appreciation Letter,” *Windows Live* (February 7, 2010). Available online at: <http://cid-fdf537a2a13ee50b.skydrive.live.com/self.aspx/E-Book/CMDP/RCAF%20appreciation%20letter.pdf>, accessed September 16, 2010.

within Cambodia. I believe this is a huge step forward to tackle issues of landmines and UXOs in your country, and I send my congratulations.”¹⁴⁸ Irwin Loy writes,

Cambodia is one of the most contaminated countries in the world when it comes to land mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). But with almost two decades of experience slowly cleaning away that legacy from contaminated rice fields and jungle brush across the country, Cambodian authorities have also become reluctant experts. They are now hoping to use that expertise to help other developing countries afflicted with similar problems.¹⁴⁹

The recent deployment of approximately two hundred RCAF engineers to Lebanon is notable for a couple of reasons; (1) the RCAF has attained a notable level of proficiency in large scale demining operations, and (2) indicates that the RCAF is willing to assume a greater role in peacekeeping operations. United Nations Resident Coordinator in Cambodia Douglas Broderick highlighted the significant milestone in remarks given at the November 2010 Departure Ceremony held for Cambodian Field Engineering Contingent 513, “[This deployment] represents an important step forward in Cambodia’s transition from a recipient country of peacekeepers to one that deploys highly skilled experts to assist in other countries where the need is great.”¹⁵⁰

E. CONCLUSION

Fifty years of continues conflict, beginning in 1945, essentially stunted the RCAF’s development as an effective fighting force. However, fifteen years of peace have allowed Cambodia to implement security sector reform measures, and begin to re-orientate the military from an internal to a more external military doctrine. The intangible dividends of five years of peacekeeping have yet to be fully witnessed.

¹⁴⁸ Forrestal, “RCAF Appreciation Letter.”

¹⁴⁹ Irwin Loy, “Development: Cambodian Deminers Now Train Others,” *Global Information Network* (October 26, 2010).

¹⁵⁰ Douglas Broderick, “Speech at the Departure of Cambodian Troops to Join UN Mission in Lebanon,” *The United Nations in Cambodia* (November 17, 2010). Available online at: http://www.un.org.kh/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=393:the-un-resident-coordinator-speech-at-the-departure-of-cambodian-troops-to-join-un-mission-in-lebanon&catid=44:un-speeches-and-statements&Itemid=77, accessed August 25, 2011.

One cannot dismiss the financial aspects of peacekeeping. As a nation, Cambodia is only assessed .003%, or approximately \$210,000 USD, of the total peacekeeping budget.¹⁵¹ Conversely, Cambodia receives a payment of approximately \$1,208 USD per month for each soldier deployed in direct support of a peacekeeping mission.¹⁵² Given Cambodia's current contribution of approximately 269 troops, the nation is reimbursed somewhere in the order of \$325,000 USD per month, or nearly \$4M USD per year. This may not sound like a lot, but for politically appointed officers with salaries of less than \$350 USD per month, access to peacekeeping funds could prove highly lucrative.¹⁵³

While it has demonstrated a high degree of proficiency in demining, the RCAF has yet to prove its ability as a battalion-sized actor in an integrated, robust peacekeeping operation. Battalion level operations, particularly in peace operations, require a proficient battalion staff; however, the established political–military patronage system makes the formation of an operationally proficient battalion staff highly unlikely. As Pamela Sodhy writes, “the main difficulty [is] changing Cambodia’s military from an essentially money making business for unscrupulous officials into a professional defense force.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ The United Nations, “Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236,” New York: The United Nations (December 31, 2009). Available online at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/64/220/Add.1, accessed September 16, 2011.

¹⁵² The United Nations, “Financing Peacekeeping,” New York: The United Nations (2011). Available online at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/financing.shtml>, accessed September 16, 2011.

¹⁵³ Figure is an average derived following numerous conversations with various RCAF officers in mid-2010 and mid-2011.

¹⁵⁴ Pamela Sodhy, “Modernization and Cambodia,” *Journal of Third World Studies* 21 (Spring 2004): 161.

IV. IN COMPARISON: THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA AND THE TNI

A. INTRODUCTION

This comparison chapter will briefly examine the role of the Republic of Indonesia's Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI) in UN-PKO. First, this chapter will provide a short historical survey of Indonesia's political and security environment. Second, this chapter will explore the contemporary TNI's role in UN-PKO. Finally, this chapter will offer a comparison of the TNI and the RCAF with the aim of explaining the level of participation gap. In accordance with Kai He's "institutional balancing" model, both the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Republic of Indonesia promote participation in UN-PKO as a means of garnering international prestige points, and thereby gaining greater access to regional and international organizations. However, because Indonesia has been able to implement an effective military reform program across a broader section of its military, it has been able to increase its participation level at a much higher rate than that of Cambodia.

B. A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF INDONESIA'S POLITICAL-MILITARY ENVIRONMENT

As with Cambodia, early Indonesian politics during the immediate post-independence period were shaped by colonial legacies, and domestic tensions. However, unlike the French in Cambodia, the returning Dutch in Indonesia almost immediately faced considerable, well-organized, and openly belligerent opposition. Dutch forces, still crippled from the recent global conflict, attempted to re-establish control on an ethnically diverse archipelago stretching thousands of miles; however, success proved fleeting. Jacques Bertrand writes, "The armed struggle with interspersed with cease-fire agreements that specified various political arrangements and divided territories under Dutch or Republican control. None of the agreements ever had time to be implemented

when the armed conflict resumed.”¹⁵⁵ Just as the Cambodian elite no longer desired to part of the French colonial system, Indonesia’s elite espoused nationalist views, and looked to unite the various islands under one banner. One man, above all others, would become the ensign bearer.

Cambodia had Sihanouk, and Indonesia had Sukarno. Likewise, just as Sihanouk turned to the FARK to establish an independent Cambodia, Sukarno looked to the fledgling military in the immediate post-independence period. Bertrand writes, “Sukarno and the armed forces chose strong-arm tactics to secure the unity of the nation, stability of the state, and resolution of fundamental questions about Indonesia’s national model.”¹⁵⁶ However, while the nation may have been unified under one banner, national stability proved elusive. By the early 1950s, Sukarno faced open dissent from proponents of the Darul Islam movement in the provinces of Aceh, Sumatra, and Sulawesi.¹⁵⁷ In fact, a momentary separatist government was formed in early months of 1958.¹⁵⁸

Ultimately, Sukarno’s reliance on violence to achieve national stability would prove to be his downfall. His relationships with military officers eventually led to rumors of favoritism, thereby isolating important (and armed) factions. As Adrian Vickers writes, “The egalitarianism of revolutionary brotherhood had been replaced by the feudal hierarchies that such progressives were meant to overthrow.”¹⁵⁹ Sukarno was ultimately deposed by the one man not explicitly targeted in the infamous September 30, 1965, coup—Major General Suharto.

The Suharto period is one marked by economic progress, as well as notable domestic social unrest. Widespread corruption brought various elements of the Suharto government into direct conflict with numerous disenfranchised groups, including the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) in the Sumatran province of Aceh, the Free Papua

¹⁵⁵ Jacques Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 32.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁵⁹ Adrian Vickers, *A History of Modern Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 155.

Movement (OPM) in the province of Irian Jaya, and the Fretilin in East Timor. In the same vane as the Hun Sen rhetoric of the post-UNTAC period, dissents were viewed by the Suharto regime as enemies of the state. Vickers writes, “The nation was seen as one big family, where there should be no signs of dissent to the benevolent patriarch.”¹⁶⁰ Under Suharto’s authorization, the TNI spent decades conducting costly offensive operations against various dissidents in the hinterlands of the archipelago.

Suharto ultimately succumbed to a burgeoning middle class. Vickers writes,

As Suharto’s grip on power became more monolithic, the growing middle class felt they were prevented from making decisions about their lives. Displays of feudal-style paternalism and sham elections were no longer enough, they wanted real democracy.¹⁶¹

The empowered masses were no longer willing to accept “authoritarianism...as the price the country paid for development.”¹⁶² Following large-scale protests, spurred to some degree by the 1997 Asian financial crisis, Suharto stepped down from power.

Indonesia experienced a succession of presidents through-out early 2000s. Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie held power for only seventeen months, from May 1998 to October 1999, before being replaced by Abdurrahman Wahid. Wahid retained power for only twenty months before being replaced by Sukarno’s daughter, Megawati Sukarnoputri, in late July 2001. Finally, another former military commander, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, was elected to office in October of 2004.

Unlike many of the previous heads-of-state, President Yudhoyono has placed a greater emphasis on the development of vital national and regional institutions. Yudhoyono places his understanding of the greater social - political environment in the following historical context:

One of the reasons our democracy has worked derives from a hard lesson from our past: the need to build a future that focuses on institutions and rules, not personalities. History, of course, is full of great men and women. But political systems that depend upon the force of individual personalities

¹⁶⁰ Vickers, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 176.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 195.

¹⁶² Ibid., 197.

will find it increasingly hard to sustain themselves. As we twice experienced in Indonesia, when a strong personality fell from power, the entire system crumbled with him because the system was simply a mirror image of the leader. Thus I would prefer to define strong leaders as those who are able to develop a durable system.¹⁶³

Referring to the Sukarno and Suharto regimes, Yudhoyono's remarks highlight the dangers of personal / popular politics, and the effect of regime change on insecure national institutions. Yudhoyono has aggressively sought institutional reform since his time in the military.

As a former TNI commander, President Yudhoyono has also been one of the more vocal proponents of military reform. John B. Haseman writes, "In charge of the social and political affairs at the time, then Lieutenant General Yudhoyono was a principal architect of the New Paradigm (*Paradigma Baru*), the formal military doctrine that replaced [Dual Function] *dwi-fungs*a."¹⁶⁴ Under *Paradigma Baru*, and in stark contrast to the RCAF in Cambodia, "the TNI has withdrawn, as an institution, from day-to-day political activities."¹⁶⁵ No longer are Indonesian military commanders focused almost exclusively on domestic (and largely political) matters; instead, they have been able to explore more cosmopolitan roles for the nation's armed forces.

C. THE TNI AND UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

The Republic of Indonesia actually has a long, albeit erratic history of participation in UN-PKO. Indonesian peacekeepers were among the rank and file of both United Nations Emergency Force missions (UNEF I / UNEF II).¹⁶⁶ In fact, Lieutenant General (Retired) Rais Abin served as UNEF II Force Commander from December 1976

¹⁶³ Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, "The Democratic Instinct in the 21st Century," *Journal of Democracy* 21 (Jul 2010): 8.

¹⁶⁴ John B. Haseman, "Indonesian Military Reform: More Than a Human Rights Issue," *Southeast Asian Affairs* (2006): 113.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁶⁶ Indonesia maintained a presence of approximately 580 troops before budgetary concerns required a redeployment of the contingent. Mary Hornaday, "Indonesia Recalls Troops from UNEF: Cost Factor Underscored," *The Christian Science Monitor* (July 23, 1957): 11.

till the mission's closing in September 1979.¹⁶⁷ Such deployments, as well as Indonesia's current participation in UNIFIL, have largely been attributed to the nation's desire to establish itself as an indispensable intermediary between the East and West. Eduardo Lachica writes, "[Indonesia] offers its services as a trusted mediator between the Muslim world and the West. It offers a secular rather than an Islamic solution. This is entirely consistent with Indonesia's traditional foreign policy, which has been studiously 'nonaligned'...."¹⁶⁸ Interestingly, in all of these deployments, the utilization of Indonesian peacekeepers has been, and continues to be, publicly criticized by Israeli diplomats, since Israel and Indonesia have yet to normalize relations.

Indonesian peacekeepers have also been used as a tool for conflict mediation on the Asian mainland. As Indonesia co-chaired the 1990 Paris Conference, Indonesian peacekeepers were some of the first to arrive in immediate post-conflict Cambodia. Indonesia maintained a battalion of troops in the national capitol, as well as exercised sector control over an area roughly corresponding to the borders of Kampong Thom Province.¹⁶⁹ However, Indonesian troops were widely criticized for failing to adhere to the directives of the Canadian force commander, and Japanese Special Representative to the Secretary General.

Since their sojourns to Cambodia, Indonesian peacekeepers have been able to demonstrate a general improvement in peacekeeping capacity. This is likely due to the methods of security sector reform implemented by President Yudhoyono. As previously stated, military commanders are no longer bound by *Dwi-Fungsa*. Moreover, Indonesian leaders have been able to re-establish relationships with their regional and international counterparts. After a decade long hiatus, the annual United States–Indonesia military peace operations exercise GARUDA SHIELD was reinstituted in mid-2007.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Rais Abin currently serves as Chairman of the Indonesia Veteran's Legion, and as President of the Veteran Confederation of ASEAN Countries (VECONAC).

¹⁶⁸ Eduardo Lachica, "Jakarta's Foray into Armed Diplomacy," *Far Eastern Economic Review* 170 (June 2007): 39.

¹⁶⁹ The United Nations, *The United Nations in Cambodia*, 36.

¹⁷⁰ United States Army, "U.S., Indonesian Armies Work Together During GARUDA SHIELD 07," (Washington, D.C.: United States Army Public Affairs, April 15, 2007).

The Indonesian military's focus on multi-lateral peace operations is indicative of a shift in military doctrine. The TNI is no longer being used to violently achieve domestic stability; instead, the force is being used in some measure to achieve stability abroad. However, it is being asked by former military and civilian leaders to do so under significant budgetary constraints. Recalling Sotomayor, participation in peacekeeping allows the force to transition from an internally focused to an externally focus military doctrine at minimal cost.

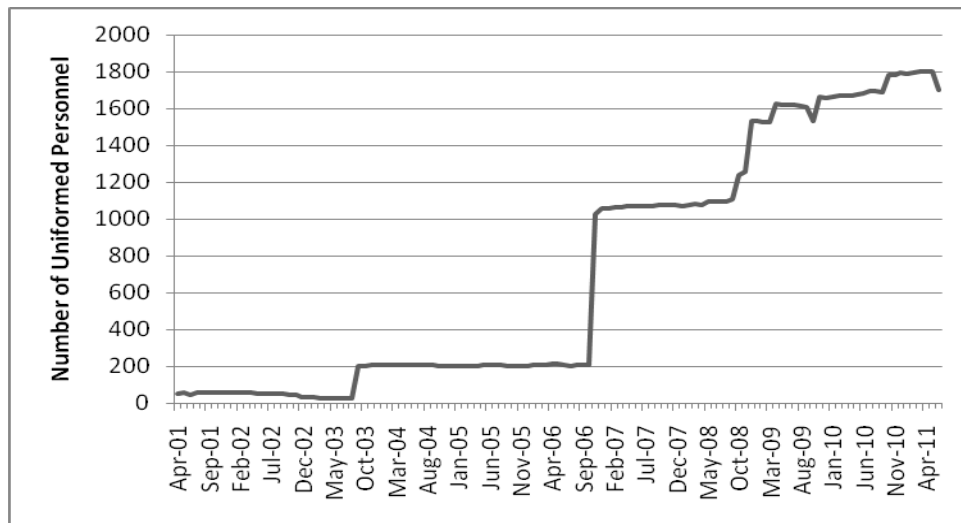


Figure 2. Indonesia's Contribution of Uniformed Personnel to UN-PKO from April 2001 through June 2011.¹⁷¹

Indonesia began to reinstate peacekeeping as a viable mission for the TNI in late 2003, with the deployment of approximately one hundred and fifty personnel to MONUC (now MONUSCO). These personnel, predominately engineers, now work alongside Indian, Bangladeshi, and Moroccan peacekeepers in and around Dungu, Province Oriental.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ Data compiled from multiple United Nations peacekeeping strength reports available online at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>.

¹⁷² The United Nations, "MONUC: April 2010," New York: The United Nations (2010). Available online at: <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/dpko/monuc.pdf>, accessed September 15, 2011.

The most notable deployment of TNI personnel to a peacekeeping mission came in late 2006, with the deployment of over nine hundred personnel to UNIFIL. Since 2009, the TNI has significantly expanded its role in UNIFIL. As of June 2011, there were over 1,353 TNI personnel serving in the mission, including twenty-three female troops.¹⁷³ Specific roles for GARUDA contingent include company-level activities at the force headquarters in Naquora, and military police duties alongside the Cambodian engineers in the most northern sector of the mission, as well as battalion-level activities in the vicinity of UNIFIL Post 7-1 near At Tayyabah.¹⁷⁴

D. CONCLUSION

The Tentara Nasional Indonesia and the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces share many commonalities: (1) both were historically used to suppress social unrest; (2) both turned to extramural economic activities to make up for budget shortfalls; (3) both have been viewed by politicians as tools for garnering international prestige points; and finally (4) both are currently the object of military reform efforts. It is the author's contention that the latter two points explain why both nations are actively participating in contemporary United Nations lead peacekeeping operations.

However, the dissimilarities between the Tentara Nasional Indonesia and the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces might explain why the TNI is far more active in peacekeeping than the RCAF: (1) whereas the armed forces of Cambodia were dragged into the broader Cold War conflict, the armed forces of Indonesia generally were not; (2) likewise, while Cambodian political-military leaders pitted indigenous forces against one-another through-out the 1970s and 1980s, Indonesian commanders largely kept their troops devoted to more economic endeavors; and finally, (3) whereas current RCAF commanders are currently active in the CPP, active duty TNI commanders have generally

¹⁷³ The United Nations, "UN Mission's Summary: Detailed by Country," New York: United Nations (2011). Available online at: http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2011/jul11_3.pdf, accessed September 14, 2011.

¹⁷⁴ The United Nations, "UNIFIL Deployment: August 2011," New York: The United Nations (2010). Available online at: <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/dpko/unifil.pdf>, accessed September 15, 2011.

withdrawn from politics. Simply put, Cambodian forces are prohibited from assuming a more active role in peacekeeping by the domestic social–political entanglements of their leaders.

V. IN CONCLUSION

A. LOOKING AT THE HYPOTHESES

1. Hypothesis 1: The RCG authorizes peacekeeping in order to conform to expectations of nation-state behavior.

The first hypothesis is also the least likely explanation for why the RCG sends RCAF peacekeepers abroad. The RCG largely discounts the potential penalties for failing to conform to expected norms of nation-state behavior.¹⁷⁵ Within the last year, the Kingdom has come to figurative blows with the United Nations regarding human rights and rule-of-law issues. The RCG has repeatedly threatened to expel the head of the United Nations Office of Human Rights in Phnom Penh.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, The United Nations Council on Human Rights' "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Cambodia," released in September 2010, was met with widespread condemnation by the Hun Sen regime.¹⁷⁷

The future of the United Nations-backed Khmer Rouge tribunals also remains uncertain. Seth Mydans provides the following commentary:

Political and legal analysts say the [RCG] investigators' stance casts a shadow over a tribunal that had been intended among other things to demonstrate the workings of a legal system untainted by politics and the official impunity that has been common in Cambodia. The investigators' actions conform with the frequently and forcefully stated view of Prime Minister Hun Sen that two trials were enough and that, as he told the U.N. secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, last October, Case Three was "not allowed."¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ For more on incentives see Finnemore, "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention," 183.

¹⁷⁶ Human Rights Watch, "Hun Sen threatens closure of UN rights office in Phnom Penh," (2010). Available online at: <http://www.hrwg.org/in/berita/asean-a-ham/566-hun-sen-threatens-closure-of-un-rights-office-in-phnom-penh->, accessed September 24, 2011.

¹⁷⁷ For the report, in its entirety, see: The United Nations, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Cambodia," New York: United Nations (September 16, 2010). Available online at: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G10/161/45/PDF/G1016145.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed September 24, 2011.

¹⁷⁸ Seth Mydans, "Trial of Former Khmer Rouge Leaders in Turmoil," *New York Times* (June 15, 2011). Available online at: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/16/world/asia/16iht-cambodia16.html?_r=1&ref=hunsen, accessed September 24, 2011.

Heder writes,

U.N. frictions were dramatized during an October 2010 meeting between Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Hun Sen, who reiterated his opposition to [Khmer Rouge Tribunal] Cases 003 and 004 and demanded the removal of the head of the U.N. human rights office in Cambodia.”¹⁷⁹ Heder concludes, “At year’s end, the future of that office and of Cases 003 and 004 remained uncertain, but Hun Sen’s determination to further neutralize U.N. agencies was clear.”¹⁸⁰

Given the recent actions of the RCG, and particularly those actions it has taken towards the United Nations, it is unlikely that it authorizes the deployment of RCAF peacekeepers in order to conform to expectations of state behavior.

2. Hypothesis 2: The RCG promotes peacekeeping as a means of improving its position in regional and international organizations.

This hypothesis seems plausible. Peacekeeping remains a laudable endeavor. In the short-term, nominal demonstrations of support for international peace initiatives may allow the RCG to mitigate donor criticism of its less-than-exemplary human rights record. Over the long-term, peacekeeping may even affect change with-in the military, and particularly among the officer corps. Haseman writes,

Professional military education that incorporates the latest principles of human rights, military operations in civilian environments, and civil–military relations cannot help but reduce the incidence of abuses and meet the demands of [military] reformists who want to see more acceptable behavior by the military become the norm.¹⁸¹

What makes this hypothesis only plausible for Cambodia, and not probable, is the fact the Kingdom has deployed peacekeepers at a much lower rate compared to other Southeast Asian nations. An examination of United Nations monthly troop contributions from early 2001 to mid-2011 reveals the disparity between the two nations examined in this thesis (i.e., Cambodia and Indonesia).

¹⁷⁹ Heder, “Cambodia in 2010,” 213.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Haseman, “Indonesian Military Reform,” 122.

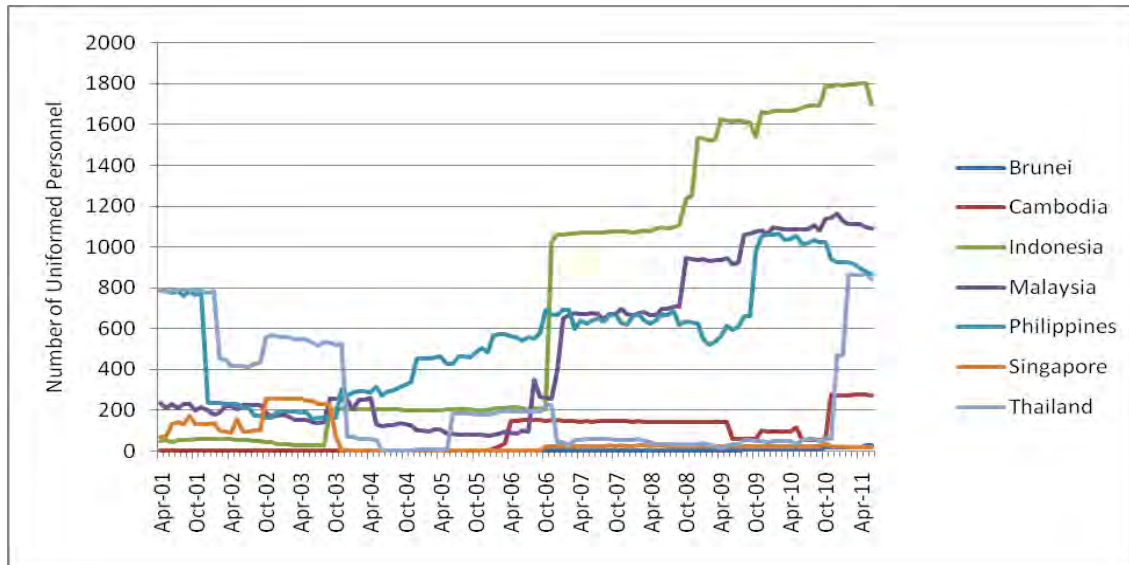


Figure 3. ASEAN Member-state Contributions to UN-PKO from April 2001 to June 2011.¹⁸²

If Cambodia looked to improve its position in either regional or international organizations, it would demonstrate a level of commitment either at or above its theoretical competitors. Moreover, Indonesia's level of participation does indeed seem to reflect President Yudhoyono's desire for Indonesia to assume a more prominent role in world politics.

3. Hypothesis 3: The RCG looks to peacekeeping as a means of affecting military reform.

This hypothesis is the most probable explanation for why the RCG authorizes the deployment of peacekeepers abroad. The current government openly looks to modernize the RCAF, yet is constrained by an economy largely dependent on international foreign aid. Cambodian de-miners have gained invaluable field experience in UNMIS / UNMISS, as well as UNIFIL. Furthermore, under the banner of improving its peace operations capacity, the RCG has been able to reinvigorate bilateral military relations with the United States, as well as the People's Republic of China, and as a result receives

¹⁸² Data compiled from multiple United Nations peacekeeping strength reports available online at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/contributors.shtml>.

a significant amount of peace operations training and sundry materiel from both powers.¹⁸³

The importance of peacekeeping as a new mission for the RCAF cannot be understated. The RCG, and more succinctly the CPP, is dominated by former military officers; however, effective command and control of the RCAF has, to some degree, been lost as individuals have transitioned from military to civilian administrative positions. By giving the military an external orientation (i.e., from internal security to international stability), generals-cum-politicians have been able to retain control of their forces. As Michael C. Desch writes, “External orientation is a necessary, though not always sufficient, condition for firm civilian control of the military.”¹⁸⁴

B. LOOKING AT CAMBODIA’S NEIGHBORS

1. The Kingdom of Thailand

Thailand is a good example of a nation faced with a mix of internal and external security threats. Internally, Thailand struggles to suppress an insurgency simmering in its southern provinces. Externally, it continually finds itself confronting trans-national issues. Notably, it continues to come to literal blows with Cambodia concerning the Preah Vihear Temple.

The Royal Thai Armed Forces (RTARF) is hesitant to deploy anything more than a battalion-sized contingent to a single United Nations-led peacekeeping operation. Senior RTARF officers remain fearful of the potential loss of life often associated with modern peace enforcement operations.¹⁸⁵ Furthermore, they are skeptical of the value of sending infantry units for peacekeeping; however, they have acknowledge the potential for either an engineering or medical unit (of any size) to gain valuable experience in

¹⁸³ Notably, the PRC supplied several tons of materiel, including hundreds of vehicles, when the U.S. briefly suspended military aid in mid-2010. Center for Strategic Studies, “Cambodian Debt to the United States, Ring of Consecrated Sand,” (July 13, 2010). Available online at: <http://csis.org/publication/cambodian-debt-united-states-ring-consecrated-sand>, accessed September 24, 2011.

¹⁸⁴ Michael C. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 18.

¹⁸⁵ Interviews conducted by the author, with several senior RTARF military officials, in July 2011.

peace operations.¹⁸⁶ Currently, the Kingdom of Thailand has only one troop contingent battalion serving in a United Nations mission—the African Union / United Nations Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).¹⁸⁷

2. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Vietnam and Cambodia have far more in the common than either is probably willing to admit. Both nations have sustained economic growth levels of approximately 7%.¹⁸⁸ Additionally, both nations have come under increasingly severe criticism of their less-than-stellar human rights records.¹⁸⁹ Finally, both nations have begun to view peacekeeping as a common ground for initiating bilateral dialogue for important regional and international economic partners (namely, the United States), and for affecting military reform.

Vietnam began to explore the possibility of peacekeeping just prior to assuming chairmanship of ASEAN.¹⁹⁰ As Chair, the nation hosted several key events, including the First ASEAN Defense Minister's Meeting-Plus (ADMM+). While Vietnam may face a slightly menacing external security threat, it faces almost no internal threats, and is likely to deploy a limited contingent of peacekeepers in the very near future.

3. Lao People's Democratic Republic

The similarities between Cambodia and Laos are readily apparent. Politically, Laos is dominated by the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, which as of 2010 held 113 of the 115 available seats in the National Assembly.¹⁹¹ Furthermore, significant corruption and a deplorable human rights record limit foreign direct investment.

¹⁸⁶ Interviews conducted by the author, with several senior RTARF military officials, in July 2011.

¹⁸⁷ United Nations, "United Nations Mission Summary Detailed by Country," (August 31, 2011) Available online at: http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2011/aug11_3.pdf, accessed September 24, 2011.

¹⁸⁸ Ramses Amer, "Vietnam in 2010," *Asian Survey* 51 (January / February 2011): 196.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 198.

¹⁹⁰ Asian-Pacific Center for Security Studies, "Workshop Focuses on Peacekeeping Options, Challenges," (April 10, 2009). Available online at: <http://www.apcss.org/workshop-focuses-on-un-peacekeeping-options-challenges/>, accessed September 24, 2011.

¹⁹¹ William Case, "Laos in 2010," *Asian Survey* 51 (January / February 2011): 202.

However, the nation has ambitiously set its sights on broadening its economic base, and achieving greater stature in regional and international organizations.¹⁹²

In the near-term, Laos is probably the least likely of Cambodia's neighbors to deploy troops in support of peace operations. This is simply due to the severely limited capacity of the Lao People's Army (LPA). Moreover, the LPAF is hobbled in engaging in externally oriented operations by an internally orientated security doctrine. The United States Central Intelligence Agency provides the following synopsis:

its mission focus is border and internal security, primarily in countering ethnic Hmong insurgent groups; together with the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and the government, the Lao People's Army (LPA) is the third pillar of state machinery, and as such is expected to suppress political and civil unrest and similar national emergencies.¹⁹³

Even a minor change to Laos' doctrine security would pay huge dividends. Such a change to Cambodia's doctrine facilitated the near-term deployment of engineers to UNMIS; these engineers have gone on to form the core of Cambodia's military demining efforts. Laos could easily improve its demining capacity by authorizing the deployment of even limited numbers of LPAF engineers to well-established United Nations missions. In fact, as is the case with Cambodia, it might even do so with financial profit.

C. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

This thesis began by stating that the largest troop contributors to current United Nations operations will be unable to sustain their commitments levels in the years to come. This examination of the Kingdom of Cambodia's reasons for participation in UNPKO has revealed a few potential incentives for other Southeast Asian states to either engage in, or escalate their level of participation in, peace operations. Peacekeeping allows for states to efficiently affect reform across select cross-sections of their militaries. Furthermore, peacekeeping allows for militaries to improve their interoperability with regional and international partners. Finally, as demonstrated in the case of Indonesia,

¹⁹² Case, "Laos in 2010," 204-205.

¹⁹³ United States Central Intelligence Agency, "Laos," *The World Factbook* (August 23, 2011), Available online at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/la.html>, accessed September 24, 2011.

peacekeeping allows states to signal their commitment to international initiatives, thereby potentially gaining greater access to both regional and international organizations.

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